



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

**MEMO**

**DATE:** May 13, 2019  
**TO:** Historic Preservation Commission  
Civic Design Review Committee, Arts Commission

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**RE:** **Civic Center Public Realm Plan**  
Case No. 2015-000937CWP

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## SUMMARY

The Civic Center Public Realm Plan creates a comprehensive vision for improvements to Civic Center's public spaces and streets. It is closely coordinated and aligned with the City's Civic Center Commons Initiative and related efforts to improve Civic Center as both a neighborhood gathering space and a common area for all San Franciscans. The Public Realm Plan envisions a unified conceptual design for Civic Center Plaza, United Nations Plaza, and the connecting block of Fulton Street ("Fulton Mall"). Over the past two years the Plan's interagency and consultant team has worked with the community to develop this vision. This memo provides an update on the Public Realm Plan and an overview of the public space conceptual design.

## BACKGROUND

Civic Center's growing resident and worker population, combined with the existing population in the Tenderloin, SoMa, and other nearby neighborhoods, places increasing demands on Civic Center's streets and public spaces. Multiple City agencies have worked on improving individual public spaces within Civic Center, but the City lacks a current comprehensive plan that ensures a cohesive approach to public realm design, operations, and management.

In response to this context, in late 2015 Mayor Ed Lee directed the Planning Department to assemble an interagency team and create a scope of work on a public realm plan for Civic Center. Funding for the plan's development was secured the following year and an RFP for public space design consultants was issued in early 2017. A consultant team led by CMG Landscape Architecture was hired in summer of 2017. Since that time, the interagency team and consultant team have been working closely with community stakeholders to create a unified vision for the area's public spaces and streets that builds off the momentum of recent improvements like the new Helen Diller Civic Center Playgrounds and Civic Center Commons Initiative.

## HISTORIC DESIGNATION

Civic Center was listed as a San Francisco Landmark District under Article 10 of the Planning Code in 1994, and portions of this district were previously listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 and as a National Historic Landmark District in 1987. Planning completed a survey of historic landscape features in the district in 2012-2015 as part of the Civic Center Cultural Landscape Inventory, which was adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission on September 16, 2015.

## PLAN AREA

The plan area is generally bounded by Gough Street, Golden Gate Avenue, Market Street and Fell Street and encompasses the San Francisco Civic Center Landmark District. Shaded areas on the map are special focus areas for design work and encompass both key public spaces and streets.





## **PLAN TIMELINE**

Winter 2016-Summer 2017	RFP & Contracting for Public Space Design Consultant Team
Summer 2017-Fall 2017	Existing Conditions Analysis, including Public Life Study
Winter 2017-Spring 2018	Public Space Frameworks & Street Design Options Development
Spring 2018-Spring 2019	Public Space Conceptual Design Development
Summer 2019-Winter 2019	Finalize Public Space Conceptual Design & Street Design Concepts
Winter 2019-Winter 2021	Environmental Review
Spring 2021	Plan Adoption Hearings

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS**

The plan's community engagement process has provided Civic Center's wide range of community stakeholders many varied opportunities to share their desires, concerns, and hopes for the area's public realm. Before design work began, the plan team conducted robust existing conditions analysis, which included two unique forms of engagement, Civic Center Stories and the Civic Center Public Space & Public Life Study.

For Civic Center Stories ([www.civiccentersf.org/civic-center-stories](http://www.civiccentersf.org/civic-center-stories)) Planning Department interns interviewed people encountered in Civic Center and, with their permission, recorded their stories and took their portraits. The resulting Civic Center Stories booklets and website puts a human face to the many diverse communities that spend time in Civic Center and helped the project team develop a better understanding of the public's sentiments, criticisms, and relationship with the area.

The Civic Center Public Space & Public Life Study was conducted with Gehl Architects, a firm that has pioneered methodologies for studying how people use public space. Over the course of seven study days, City staff and dozens of community volunteers conducted counts, observations, and intercept surveys that measured how people use, move through, and feel about Civic Center's public spaces. These efforts set the stage for the project team to better understand public sentiments and existing conditions prior to initiating design work.

In summer 2017, the project team began partnering with CMG Landscape Architecture and their subconsultant InterEthnica to implement a community engagement strategy for all phases of conceptual design. Given the high population of lower-income and immigrant communities in the Tenderloin and SoMa, a special focus has been placed on ensuring that traditionally underserved communities are able to participate in the planning process. In addition to three large public workshops, the engagement process has included multilingual focus groups, a youth focus group, a Community Working Group, in-person and online surveys, and interactive on-site outreach via a "Mobile Outreach Station" developed as part of Planning's GroundPlay program. Over a year and half, more than 90 community organizations and over 3,000 people have participated in the planning process.

## **PUBLIC SPACE CONCEPTUAL DESIGN**



*Bird's eye view of public space conceptual design. Additional images available at [www.civiccentersf.org](http://www.civiccentersf.org)*

An update on the Public Realm Plan was last presented to Architectural Review Committee of the Historic Preservation Commission on June 6, 2018 and to the Civic Design Review Committee of the Arts Commission on June 25, 2018. Those presentations focused primarily on three design “frameworks” created for Civic Center’s public spaces. The frameworks responded to in-depth existing conditions analysis and input received via extensive community engagement. Since that time, the design team has incorporated input on the frameworks to create a unified conceptual design for Civic Center Plaza, Fulton Mall, and United Nations Plaza.

Seven public space principles were developed with stakeholders through the planning process. These principles will serve as touchstones for further development of the design, implementation, and management of the project as it evolves; that Civic Center will be:

- A landmark that celebrates shared history and tradition
- A flexible, accessible, inviting place for all to gather
- The City’s cultural hub and political heart
- A source of beauty, delight, and wellness
- The safest place in San Francisco
- A generous space that meets the basic needs of diverse publics
- Designed + managed through an inclusive process that fosters equity

Recent improvements such as the Helen Diller Playgrounds and ongoing activation and stewardship through the Civic Center Commons Initiative have demonstrated the potential to make Civic Center more welcoming and inclusive through addition of specific amenities and programming. The conceptual design extends the lessons learned from these improvements throughout the district and addresses the design challenges the spaces face today through three goals:

- **A Landmark District:** Within the overarching Beaux-Arts structure of axial relationships and symmetry, spaces are arranged for performance, recreation and gathering.
- **A Flexible, Accessible, Ceremonial Gathering Space:** Human-scaled spaces offering fixed amenities frame larger flexible plazas for events and festivals, in which the diversity of culture unique to San Francisco can be celebrated.
- **An Inviting Place that Welcomes Everyday Use:** A variety of features and amenities are distributed across the public realm, to invite people from all over the City and all walks of life to enjoy these important public spaces daily.

Key features of the public space conceptual design are described below.

#### **KEY PUBLIC SPACE CONCEPTUAL DESIGN FEATURES**

**The Civic Promenade.** A tree-lined “Civic Promenade” from Market Street to City Hall would connect a variety of landscape experiences and amenities that engage the adjacent buildings and neighborhoods:

- **Civic Center Plaza** is envisioned as the most civic space, its arrangement reflecting Beaux Art symmetry and the intention of Civic Center’s original 1912 plan to create a grand venue for large events. The center of the plaza would contain a large, open flexible area consisting of a central paved plaza flanked with lawn panels. Lawn panels would be sized for recreational uses such as youth soccer programs that take place today. At the same time, the conceptual design proposes adding more intimate spaces for daily activity and carefully integrating park pavilion structures that provide pedestrian access to Brooks Hall and the Civic Center Garage. The existing Helen Diller Civic Center Playgrounds would be retained and complimented by new “gardens of delight” and “gardens of memory” at the plaza’s edges that bring beauty and seasonal character.
- **Fulton Mall** is conceived as a new public park and the cultural heart of the district. It would include revived access to the Main Library and the Asian Art Museum from Fulton Street and new uses such as a sculpture garden, information/stewards center, and reading room at their edges. The conceptual design proposes closing the street to traffic to create new flexible space on plaza and lawn that provide settings for on-going and new activities. Lawn panels would be sized to accommodate daily recreational activities such as youth soccer.
- **UN Plaza** would be renovated as a neighborhood-focused market plaza that supports the Farmers’ Market. Existing UN Charter commemorations would be retained while adding sites to commemorate local heroes. The plaza’s Leavenworth segment would be transformed as a gateway and neighborhood mini-park featuring amenities like a dog play area, outdoor exercise equipment, and an interactive community message board. A new BART station

pavilion and adaptive reuse of the historic fountain designed by Lawrence Halprin would create new amenities that help anchor the Market Street edge of the plaza.

**District Identity.** Founded on the symmetry, axial relationships, and historic elements of the original 1912 plan, the conceptual design proposes adding new places and uses with a Beaux-Arts frame created through trees, paving, circulation, and lighting. Visual and physical access along the Civic Promenade, a character-defining feature of the historic district, would be the major organizing element.

- **Paving** would provide district cohesion while introducing visual interest, texture, and fine-grained scale. The Civic Promenade could incorporate a special paving feature, a “*Timeline of Civic Activism*”, that unifies this key character-defining feature of the district.
- **Circulation** and universal access are fundamental to the design. The design addresses approximately 15 feet of grade change from City Hall to Market Street to provide universal access and shape gathering spaces.
- **Trees** and planting would provide district cohesion, reinforce the Civic Promenade, frame Civic Center Plaza, shelter the public spaces, and create seasonal delight and spectacle across the district.
- **Lighting** would enhance the district as a nighttime destination, with lighting for safety, facade lighting that reinforces the historic architectural frame, lighting that highlights historic resources such as the Civic Promenade, gateways and monuments, and special lighting that adds playful and sculptural features.

**Civic Attractors – Art, Monuments, and Memorials.** With the understanding that new public art, monuments and memorials need to be developed via the San Francisco Arts Commission’s standard processes and procedures, the team has identified opportunities for art and special commemorations within the context of the overall design vision for Civic Center’s public spaces. These opportunities are distributed across the district, serving as beacons that mark gateways, connect corridors, and reinforce the Civic Promenade. Key features and opportunities identified in the conceptual design include:

- **Fountains.** The Civic Promenade would be anchored at either end by two fountains: the UN Plaza fountain and a new mirror fountain at Civic Center Plaza.
  - **UN Plaza Fountain.** The existing fabric of the UN Plaza fountain would be adapted to provide accessibility, visibility, and ecological function, transforming what is now a barrier into an amenity for the neighborhood and a welcoming gateway.

Part of the fountain’s lowest level would be raised and paved, with sloped walks added to provide access from the plaza. This raised area would incorporate a small, playful interactive water feature that could be turned off depending on programming and weather. When this feature is off, the paved area would become a flexible place for small performances or movable seating.

The remaining portion of the fountain’s lowest level would be modified as a planted stormwater detention garden, part of the larger green infrastructure strategy for the district. These adaptations to the UN Plaza fountain would be complimented by new neighborhood amenities on the Leavenworth portion of UN Plaza that create a gateway between Civic Center and the Tenderloin.

- **Civic Center Plaza Mirror Fountain.** A mirror fountain—a thin sheet of water—at the heart of the plaza would lend solemnity to the space with reflection of the City Hall dome. The fountain would be aligned at the center of the plaza’s Beaux Art axes and reference the central fountains of the 1912 plan. With a mist element, it can also be a playful feature that compliments the plaza’s lawns and playgrounds as a family-friendly destination. The water could be turned off and drained to expand usable plaza area for events. The mirror fountain would bring texture, scale, and depth to the large civic gathering space at the heart of the plaza and reflect the beauty of City Hall and the adjacent landscape.
- **Public Art, Monuments & Memorials.** Opportunities for public art, monuments and memorials have been identified with an eye toward commemorating and celebrating San Francisco’s history and culture and reinforcing Civic Center’s role as a communal space shared by all.
  - **Timeline of Civic Activism.** The Civic Promenade paving linking City Hall to Market Street could incorporate a timeline that commemorates culturally significant protests and celebrations that have occurred in Civic Center over time, inscribing in Sierra White granite stone paving the key details of these civic gatherings.
  - **Civic Center Plaza Gardens of Memory.** Gardens of Memory would evoke the history of Civic Center and the City and create a quiet place of respite. Memorialization could include interpretive features that reference the area’s historic use as the Yerba Buena Cemetery, and via features such as bronze benches that could serve as personal memorials or commemorations. The gardens would be protected with benches and rails that are in keeping with the design and materiality of the district’s historic architecture.
  - **Pioneer Monument.** The conceptual design studies the potential relocation of the Pioneer Monument elsewhere within the Civic Center Historic District. A decision has not been made whether to relocate the Monument, and if so, where to relocate it to. No such decision will be made prior to full analysis of the Civic Center Public Realm Plan through a public review process, including compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). At the end of that process, the City may decide to keep the Pioneer Monument in its current location or to move it to another location within the district.
  - **Asian Art Museum Sculpture Garden.** A sculpture garden along the Asian Art Museum’s Fulton Street frontage could be curated by the Museum, building on the concept currently being prototyped via the “Village Artist’s Corner.” A new food and beverage kiosk at the east end of the garden could be an outpost for the Museum’s Cafe.
  - **Flagpole Grove.** The existing flagpoles in Civic Center Plaza that frame the central axis could be relocated to the corner of Grove and Larkin Streets, identifying this important gateway and celebrating the City’s history and the name it was once known by, “The City of Flags.”

- **Local Heroes Walk.** In UN Plaza elements such as commemorative monuments to the UN charter, flagpoles, and mast lights would be retained. To reinforce the neighborhood identity of the space, a “Local Heroes Walk” could be integrated into the existing granite columns to celebrate community members, in dialogue with the UN’s global focus.
- **Orpheum Theater Façade.** Enlivening the blank UN Plaza façade of the Orpheum Theater has been contemplated since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, when a Beaux-Arts façade was proposed. The conceptual design envisions a whimsical take on the original façade concept with a resin-cast, colorful interpretation of the Federal Building’s façade.

**Green Infrastructure.** Smart water use is integrated with the conceptual design’s organization. The Civic Center district is envisioned as the safest place in San Francisco, both in terms of the well-being of daily visitors, but also in the event of major disruption such as an earthquake. As a large central open space, Civic Center Plaza plays an important role in evacuation and staging for disaster recovery.

Reclaimed water from the district, which is typically dumped into the combined sewer system, would be intercepted and treated for use in district irrigation, fountains and stored in a 72,000-gallon tank housed with Brooks Hall for emergency drinking water. Proposed detention of rain water, notably in the Halprin fountain, would lessen downstream flooding of streets in SoMa during storms.

**Urban Ecology.** The conceptual design embraces the City’s goals of reducing carbon emissions through tree planting and increasing biodiversity through planting. Throughout the plan’s outreach process a strong desire for additional trees and greening in Civic Center was expressed by the community. Civic Center’s public spaces can serve as much-needed respite from the intensely built-up environment of surrounding neighborhoods.

Understory planting, typically vulnerable to the crowds that can overwhelm Civic Center, would be established in protected areas, specifically associated with seating, for the visitors’ intimate connection to nature as well as the environmental benefit offered. In addition to their ecological function, trees would be used to define the edges Civic Center’s public spaces, block prevailing winds, and provide natural beauty.

**Basic Services.** Bathrooms, abundant seating and drinking fountains would be distributed across all public spaces. They would be co-located with other active uses in the landscape to ensure eyes on the facilities.

**Brooks Hall & Civic Center Garage.** The conceptual design anticipates retention of the existing Civic Center Garage and reuse of Brooks Hall beneath Civic Center Plaza. The garage would be improved with more space-efficient vehicular ramps and a more welcoming plaza-level pedestrian entry pavilion. A variety of reuse options were studied for Brooks Hall. Due to uncertainty over the timeline for funding Brooks Hall improvements, as well as uncertainty over future real estate needs and market conditions, a recommended use has not yet been determined. However, the site plan includes plaza-level pavilion structures that have been carefully sited and sized to ensure they provide sufficient public and emergency egress/ingress to accommodate a variety of new uses within Brooks Hall.

**Pavilions.** Architectural structures, pavilions and kiosks would be strategically located to house basic services and food and beverage to invigorate important edges and areas of the district. Modest additions to the façade of Bill Graham Civic Auditorium and a pavilion on the south side of Civic Center Plaza frame the Grove Street “Culture Corridor” would enliven it with food and beverage uses, building on the success



of the Bi-Rite pavilion. New pavilions on the library terrace would activate the edge of Fulton Mall, provide basic services, and a home for Civic Center's stewards.

At UN Plaza, a new BART pavilion would become a landmark "lantern" anchoring the eastern end of Civic Center. The pavilion would stand opposite the UN Plaza Fountain and form a gateway to Civic Center and the promenade to City Hall. The BART pavilion would provide protected access to underground transit, a market hall that compliments the existing Heart of the City Farmers Market, and multi-purpose community space on the second floor.

### **STREET DESIGN CONCEPTS**

The project team has created initial design options for improvements to key streets in the plan area, with a focus on Grove and Polk streets. Further interagency refinement of these street design concepts will resume in summer 2019, pending in-depth traffic analysis currently being conducted by SFMTA. Two key street design concepts integral to the plan are:

**Grove Street Culture Corridor** imagines recasting Grove Street as a "Culture Corridor" designed to link the numerous arts and cultural institutions in the immediate vicinity. The block of Grove Street adjacent to Civic Center Plaza and Bill Graham Civic Auditorium is envisioned as an anchor to the corridor, functioning as a lively public space with a flexible, pedestrian-focused streetscape.

**War Memorial Gateway** at Franklin and Fulton streets is envisioned as a welcoming western gateway to Civic Center. The existing asphalt parking lot at the back of the War Memorial Courtyard would be regraded and repaved with clear pathways that create safer paths of travel and a flexible use plaza that accommodates vehicular access, parking/loading, and events.

The concepts described above, as well as additional street design options, can be viewed online at: <https://civiccentersf.org/about/creating-the-plan/phase-2/framework-plans/>

### **NEXT STEPS**

In summer 2019, the design team will incorporate feedback received via community outreach and commission informational hearings into a draft Civic Center Public Realm Plan document. Vetting and further development of street design concepts will also resume, based on outcomes of SFMTA traffic analysis. From there, Planning will initiate CEQA review which is anticipated to take up to two years with plan adoption hearings following. Phasing and funding strategies are in-progress and will continue to be refined as the plan undergoes CEQA review. Following CEQA review, we envision that the design policies and conceptual designs for Civic Center would be adopted into the Civic Center Area Plan of the San Francisco General Plan where they can guide decisions regarding design and use of the Civic Center streets and public spaces.

While CEQA review takes place, the Public Realm Plan team will continue to coordinate with the Civic Center Commons Initiative on pursuing opportunities to bring new amenities and activities to Civic Center and piloting concepts from the plan. The Commons Initiative and Public Realm Plan team are also partnering on the development of public spaces management strategies for the area.

For more information, please visit: [www.civiccentersf.org](http://www.civiccentersf.org).

**ACTION REQUESTED**

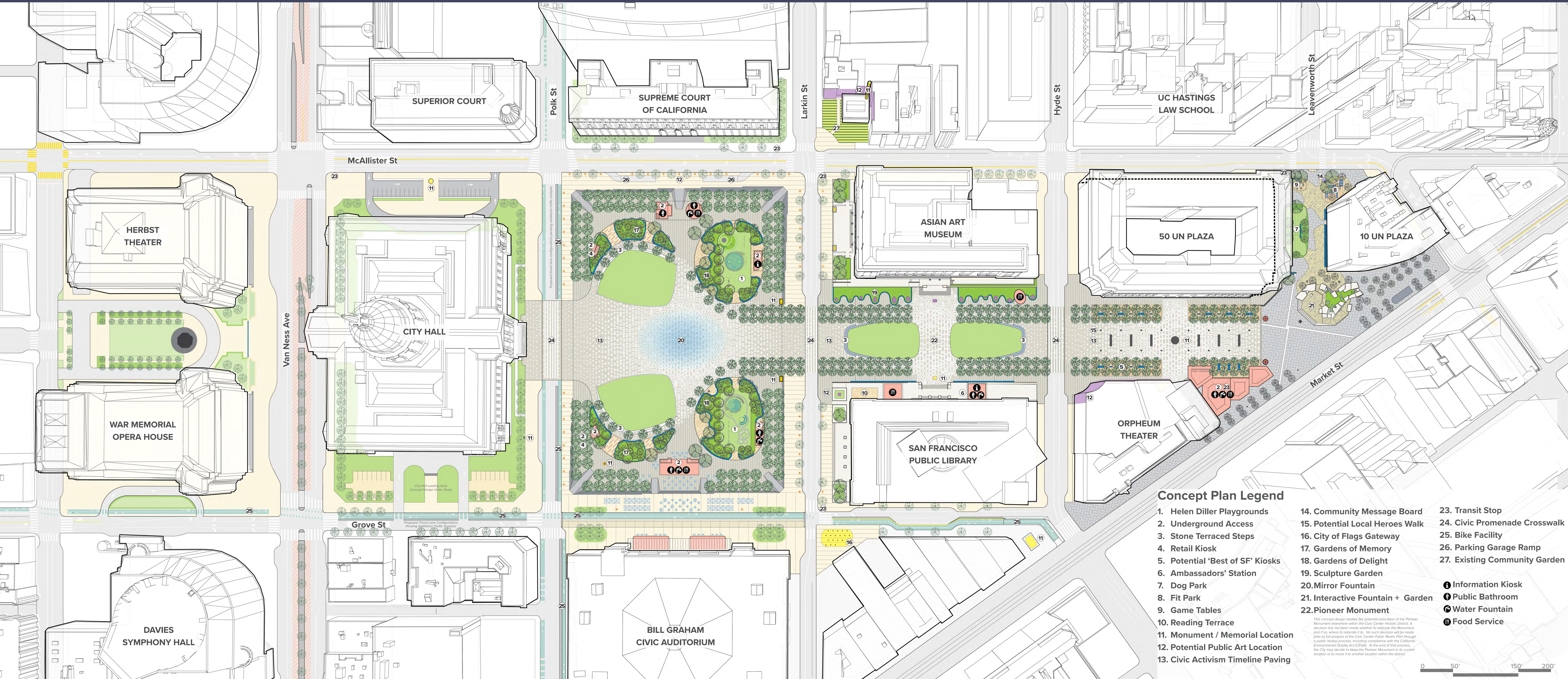
This item is being presented for informational purposes only. No formal action by the Historic Preservation Commission or Civic Design Review Committee of the Arts Commission is required. The project team requests that the Historic Preservation Commission and Arts Commission Civic Design Review committee issue a joint memorandum summarizing feedback on the conceptual design for Civic Center's public spaces.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Civic Center Public Space Conceptual Design Packet



# Civic Center Public Realm Plan: Concept Design





# Civic Center is a public space for all San Franciscans: a ceremonial gathering place that welcomes everyday use and inspires civic pride.

Civic Center es un espacio para todos los habitantes de San Francisco: un punto de reunión ceremonial que acoge el uso diario e inspira el orgullo cívico.

市政中心公共區域 (Civic Center) 是所有三藩市市民的公共空間：一個可舉行正式儀式的聚集地，歡迎日常使用並激發市民的自豪感。

Pampublikong espasyo ang Civic Center para sa lahat ng taga-San Francisco; isa itong lugar para sa mga panseremonyang pagtitipon na malugod na tinatanggap ang pang-araw-araw na paggamit, at kung saan, napupukaw ang dangal sa pagkamamamayan.





Open House #1 - November 7, 2017

Open House #2

'Vision & Action' Activity - Open House #1

Community Working Group #1

In-Person Surveying - Farmers' Market

Mobile Outreach Station - Farmers' Market

Mobile Outreach Station - Civic Center Plaza

Open House #2

Mobile Outreach Station - UN Plaza

# THANK YOU!

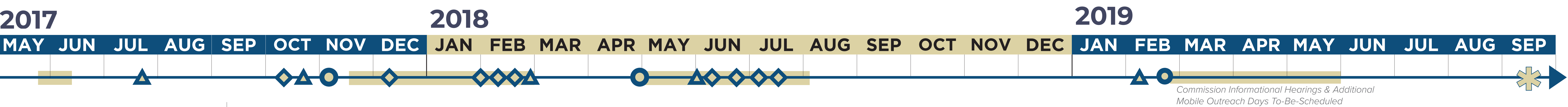
Through workshops, focus groups, meetings and surveys, community input has shaped the vision for Civic Center's future.

Thank you for sharing your time, input, and dreams for the heart of the City.

- ## PUBLIC SPACE PRINCIPLES

  - 1. A landmark that celebrates shared history and tradition**
    - Goal: Celebrate the National Landmark Beaux-Arts District in a contemporary way
    - Goal: Celebrate the best of the City's neighborhoods and cultures
    - Goal: Create an iconic and authentic destination that is memorable for visitors and residents and embodies the best of San Francisco to the rest of the world
  - 2. A flexible, accessible, inviting space for all to gather**
    - Goal: Support large public gatherings, celebrations, protests, and marches
    - Goal: Create inviting spaces serving families and visitors of diverse ages and income ranges: multi-generational and multi-functional.
    - Goal: Transform a car-centric public realm into a place for people.
  - 3. The City's cultural hub and political heart**
    - Goal: Celebrate the diversity of San Francisco as a global city.
    - Goal: Provide opportunities and space for expression, performance, and public art in the public realm.
    - Goal: Celebrate the rich history of political activism at Civic Center
  - 4. A source of beauty, delight, and wellness**
    - Goal: Provide access to nature
    - Goal: Provide access to beauty: seasonality, color, flowers
    - Goal: Make a comfortable and welcoming environment day and night - a place that is pleasant to be in and linger
    - Goal: Responsibly steward shared resources
  - 5. A generous space that meets the basic needs of diverse publics**
    - Goal: Provide basic amenities in the public realm and address the specific needs of the spaces: bathrooms, water fountains, seating, lighting.
    - Goal: Ensure that basic amenities are a physical embodiment of generosity.
    - Goal: Support the public spaces with a public health agenda that prioritizes recreation, wellness, and healthy uses.
  - 6. The safest place in San Francisco**
    - Goal: Maintain a clean, safe, and inviting environment
    - Goal: Ensure Civic Center is an accessible, resilient resource in the heart of the city after an emergency event.
    - Goal: Sustain community ambassadors program to help make people feel comfortable and discourage anti-social behavior.
  - 7. Designed + managed through an inclusive process that fosters equity**
    - Goal: Economic inclusion - local vendors (affordable rent, affordable food)
    - Goal: Support and augment the Farmers' Market, local jobs and commerce.
    - Goal: Support small businesses in non-competitive way: incubate.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MILESTONES TIMELINE



## THANK YOU!

The project team thanks all the individuals and organizations for their on-going participation in the planning process and helping to spread the word to the community about the plan:

### COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Angela Jenkins  
Barbara Thompson  
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Fadhl Radman  
Gene Alejo  
Lizzette Dukes  
Norma Carerra  
Robert Heller  
Terrance Blake  
Carlos Villavicencio  
Yajaira Espadas  
Stephanie Clarizo

### COMMUNITY GROUPS & INSTITUTIONS

826 Valencia (Tenderloin Center)  
America Scores Bay Area  
Arab American Grocer Association  
Arlington Residence  
Asian Art Museum  
Bay Area Women's and Children Center  
Bayanihan Community Center  
Boys and Girl Clubs Tenderloin  
Canon Kip Senior Center  
Central City SRO Collaborative  
Charity Cultural Services Center

Chinese Newcomers Service Center  
Community Youth Center (CYC)  
Curry Senior Center  
De Marillac Academy  
Emeral Fund (100 & 150 Van Ness)  
Glide Memorial Church  
Hamilton Families  
Hayes Valley Merchants/Neighborhood Ass.  
Hospitality House  
Independent Living Resource Center  
Independent Living Skills Program  
Instituto Familiar De La Raza, Inc.  
La Voz Latina  
LightHouse for the Blind & Visually Impaired

Livable City  
Lutheran Social Services  
Mariland Market  
Mercy Housing  
Mid Market CAP Community Ambassador Program  
Mission Economic Development Association (MEDA)  
Mission Hiring Hall  
Mission Neighborhood Centers – Precita Center  
Mission YMCA  
Mosser Towers Appt  
Mujeres Unidas y Activas (MUA)  
Oasis Apts  
Project Homeless Connect  
Safe House Arts

Safe Routes to School  
Salvation Army Kroc Center  
San Francisco AIDS Foundation  
San Francisco Ballet  
San Francisco Bike Coalition  
San Francisco Democratic Party  
San Francisco Opera  
San Francisco Public Library  
San Francisco Symphony  
Self Help for the Elderly  
Senior & Disability Action  
SF Day Labor Program and Women's Collective  
SFLGBT Center  
Shih Yu Lang Central YMCA (Boedekker Park)

South of Market Community Action Network  
Southeast Asian Community Center  
SPUR  
St. Anthony Foundation  
St. Anthony's Dining Room  
St. Francis Living Room Foundation  
Sword for Plowshares  
Tenderloin Community Benefit District  
Tenderloin Community School  
Tenderloin Housing Clinic  
Tenderloin Neighborhood Development (TNDC)  
Tenderloin Safe Passage  
TNDC After School Program (TASP)  
TNDC Tenderloin Neighborhood Development

Tool Works  
Unite Here  
Vietnamese Youth Development Center  
Walk SF  
Woman Inc  
Year Up  
YMCA  
YMCA Chinatown  
U.C. Hastings School of Law  
...and more!



# Designed + managed through an inclusive process that fosters equity

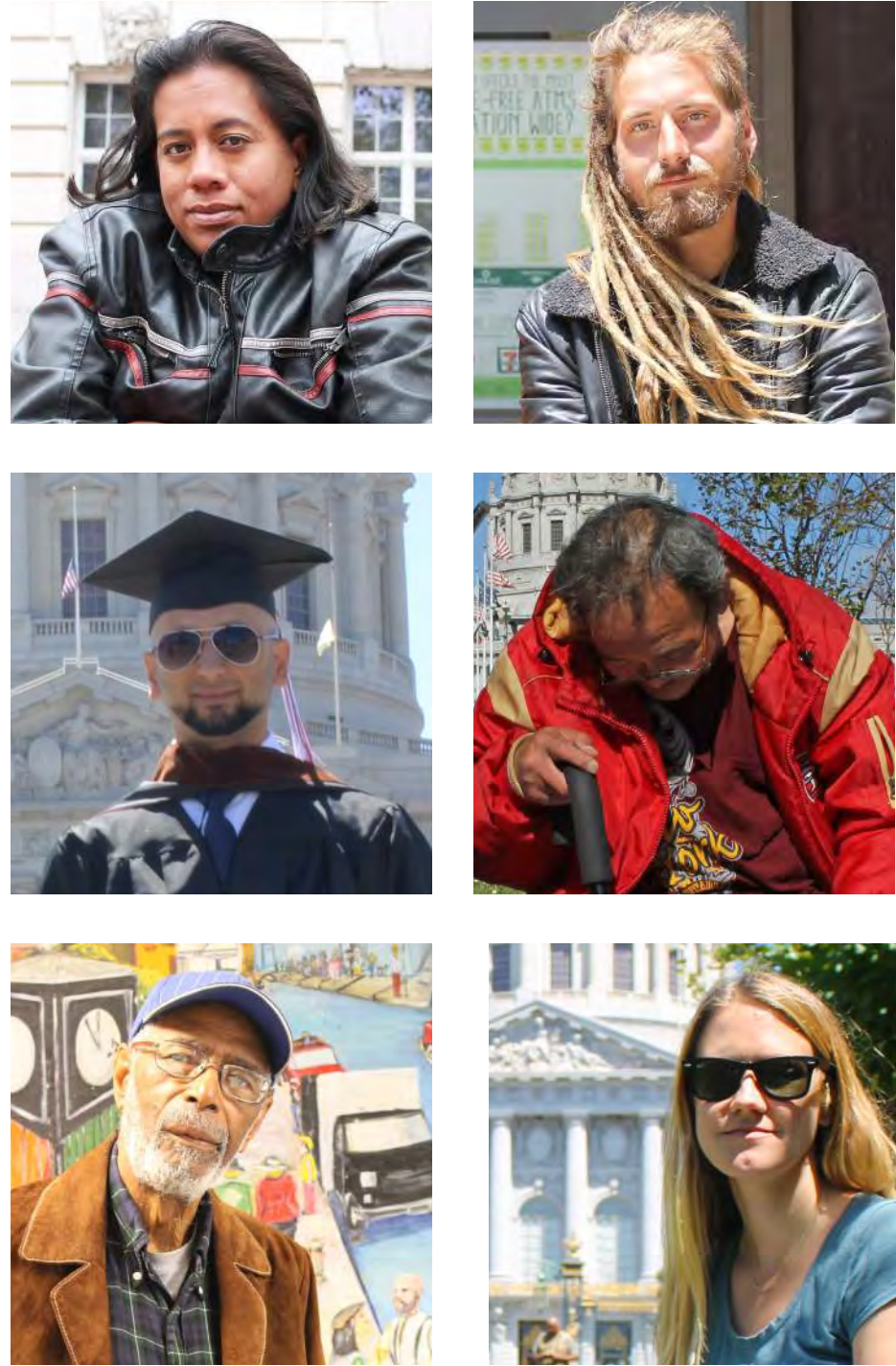


## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS

### CIVIC CENTER STORIES

Summer 2016 & 2017

Civic Center Stories was an early engagement effort that took place at the start of the plan's development. In the summer of 2016 & 2017, the Planning Department reached out to individuals in Civic Center who were willing to share their stories and experiences in the area. The project aimed to bring a human face to the individuals who spend time in the "Heart of the City" and develop a better understanding of the public's sentiments, criticisms, and relation to Civic Center.



Portraits from SF Planning's "Civic Center Stories" Project

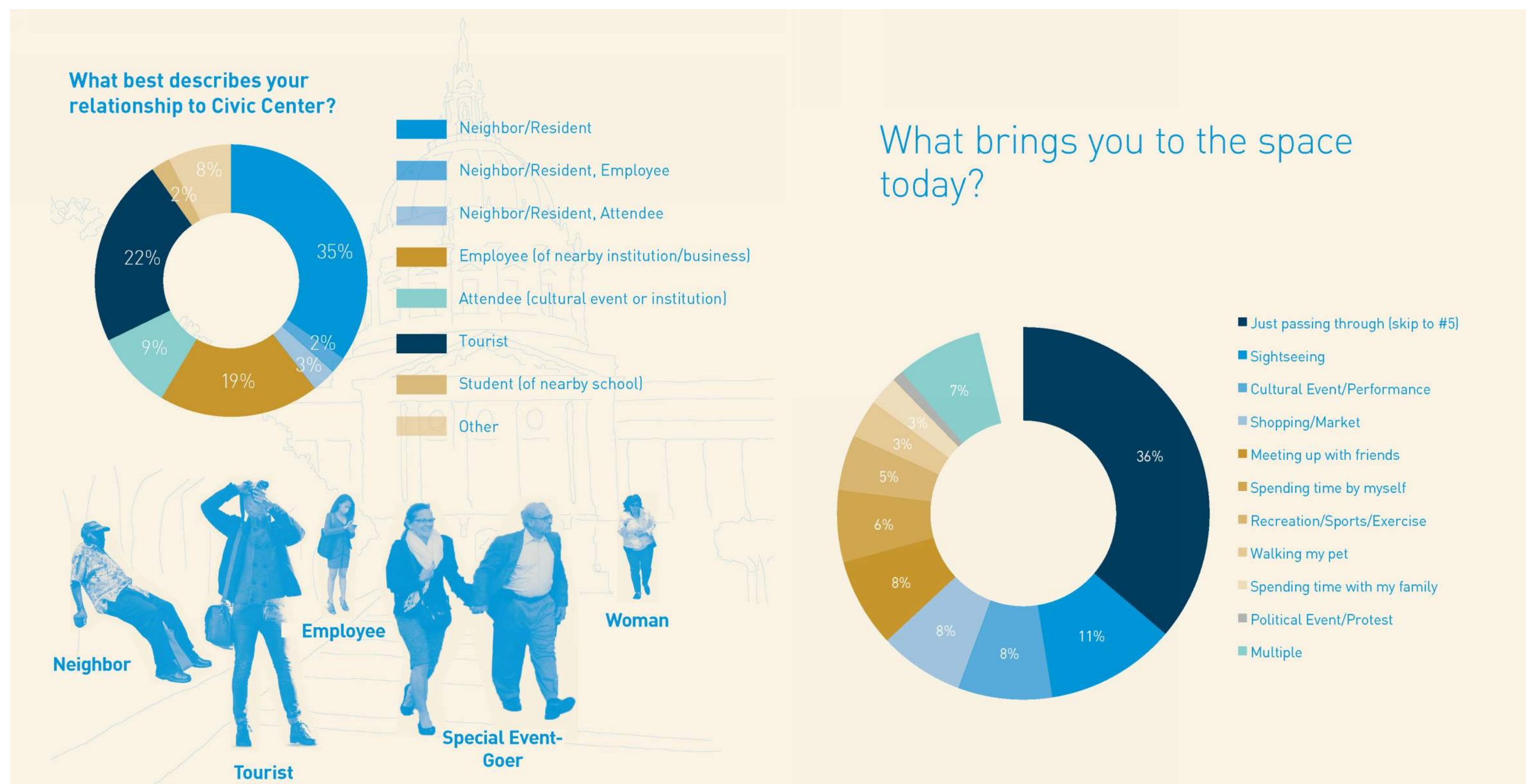


Civic Center Stories Website: [civiccenstersf.org/civic-center-stories](http://civiccenstersf.org/civic-center-stories)

### PUBLIC SPACE & PUBLIC LIFE STUDY

Spring 2017

In Spring of 2017 the Planning Department worked with Gehl to conduct a Public Space & Public Life Study of Civic Center. Part of the study included focus groups and an on-site survey of people passing through or spending time in Civic Center's public spaces. Over 400 people filled out the survey. Survey results and focus group discussions informed the plan's analysis of existing conditions in the area.



Examples of survey results from the Public Space & Public Life Study

### IN-LANGUAGE & YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS

Fall 2017

In an effort to get feedback and perspectives from communities sometimes under-represented at City outreach events, four focus group discussions were held with the local residents from the following communities in Fall 2017:

- Vietnamese (Conducted in Vietnamese)
- Chinese (Conducted in Chinese)
- Latino (Conducted in Spanish)
- Youth, Ages 13-17 (Conducted in English)

Findings were summarized in a Focus Group Report which directly informed the development of the design frameworks for Civic Center's public spaces.



"We don't need another space for people to get together, we need a green space. In San Francisco there's a lack of trees, lack of greenery, lack of shade. This would attract more people and be better for the environment."

"I like to go to the park and exercise after I drop my kids off at school. I like to take my daughter to the surrounding parks, the ones close to where we live."

"I would like to have places where we can get food to eat, drink, and get refreshments and things; where you can grocery shop and get basic necessities."

Examples of feedback received via in-language and youth focus groups.

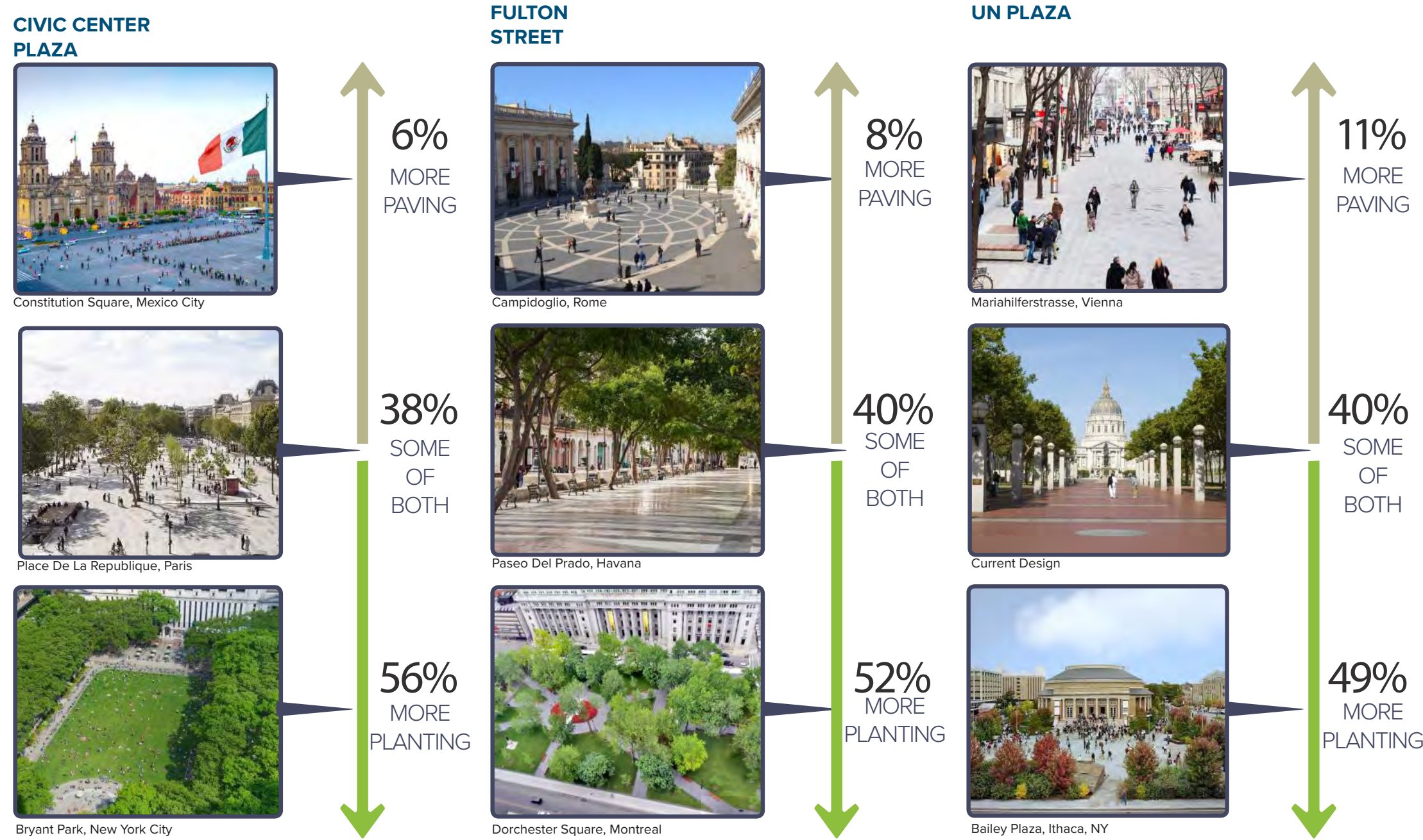
"Offer activities for the children and teens that would really grab their attention so they wouldn't go out onto the streets and do stuff they shouldn't do. They could have soccer, basketball."

### PHASE 1 WORKSHOP & COMMUNITY SURVEY

Fall 2017 - Winter 2018

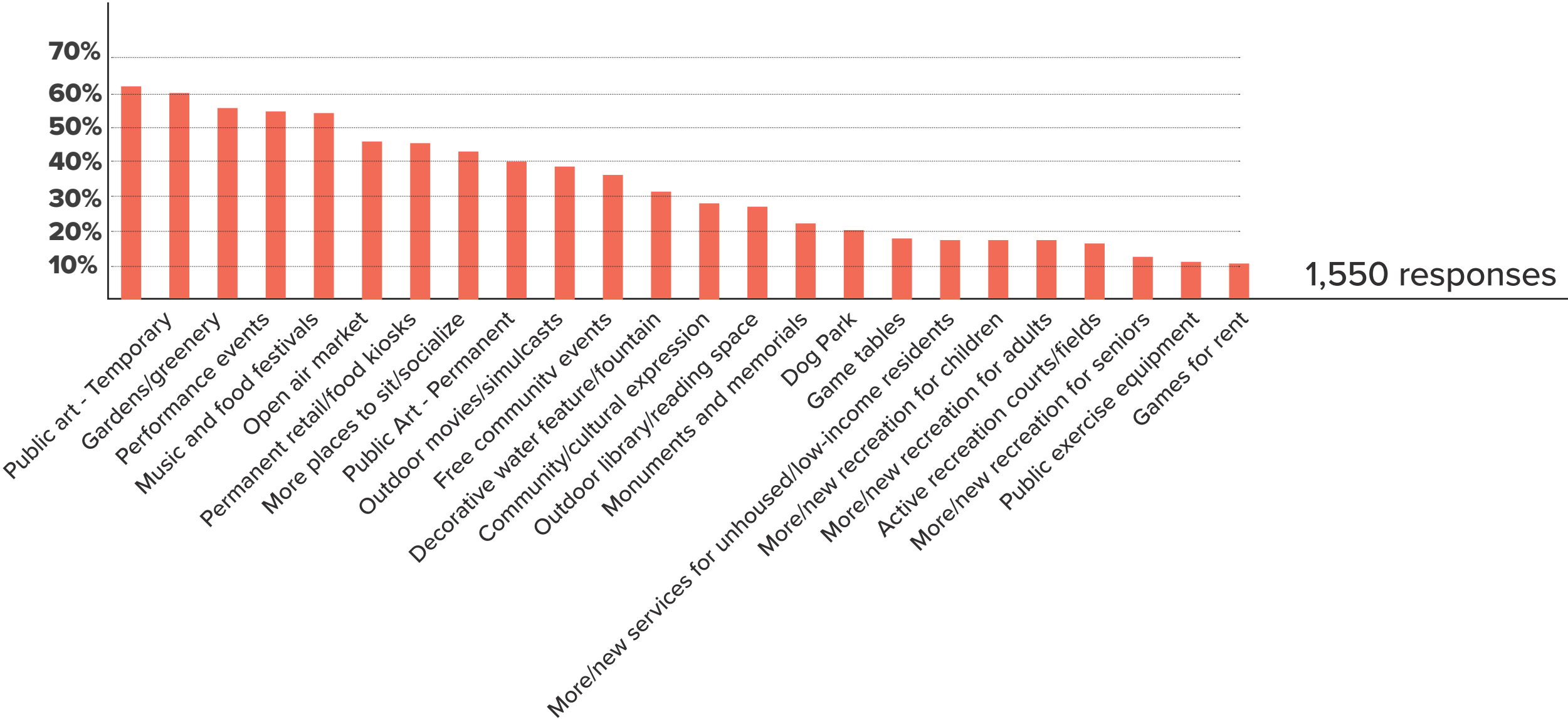
Over 70 people attended the plan's first workshop/open house and provided feedback via interactive boards and group discussion. Following the open house, a community survey was conducted. 280 surveys were conducted on-site in Civic Center, with two-thirds conducted in a language other than English. Over 2,000 online survey results were also collected via the project's website. Results from Phase 1 outreach helped shape the design frameworks for Civic Center's public spaces.

#### Should the public spaces have more planting or paving?



Example of survey results showing preferences for the balance between paving and flexible space versus planting in each of Civic Center's public spaces

#### What new events and attractions would you like to see in Civic Center's public spaces?



Example of survey results showing events and attractions people would most like to see added to Civic Center's public spaces.



# Designed + managed through an inclusive process that fosters equity



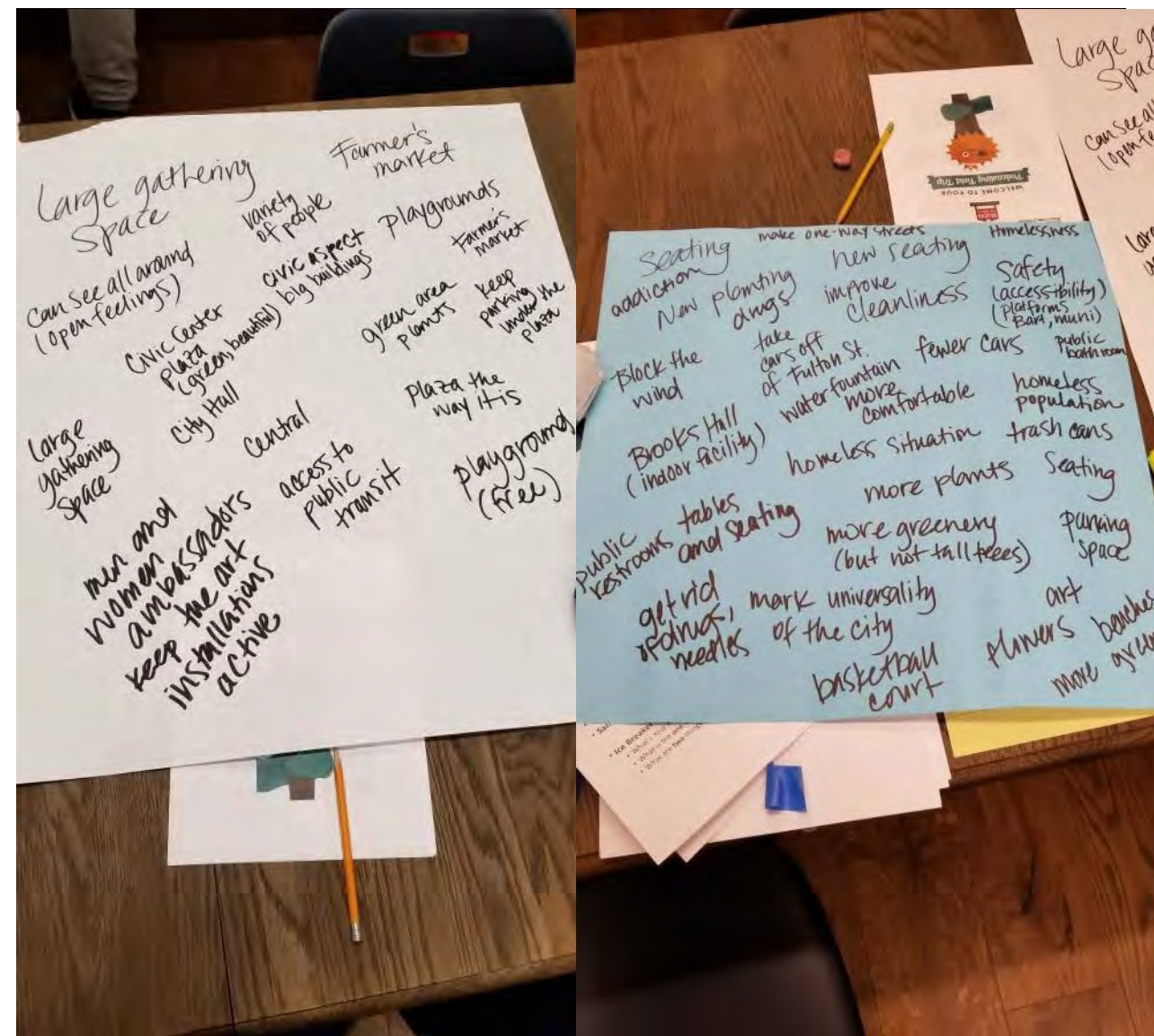
## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS

### COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP

On-Going



A group of local residents reflecting the diverse populations that surround Civic Center has been convened by InterEthnica to help the design team better understand community sentiments as the plan has been developed. Working Group members have also helped share news of the plan within their communities. Some examples of the working group's feedback are summarized below.



**What is one thing you like about Civic Center and would want to keep?**

Farmers' Market at UN Plaza  
Civic Center Playgrounds  
Architecture  
Community Ambassadors  
Access to public transit  
SF Public Library programming  
Entertainment

**What are two improvements you would like to see implemented?**

Generally more comfortable and cleaner  
Public restrooms  
Water fountains  
Trash cans  
International food court  
Active recreation (basketball court)  
More greenery / place of respite  
Tables and chairs

### PHASE 2 WORKSHOP, SURVEY, & FOCUS GROUPS

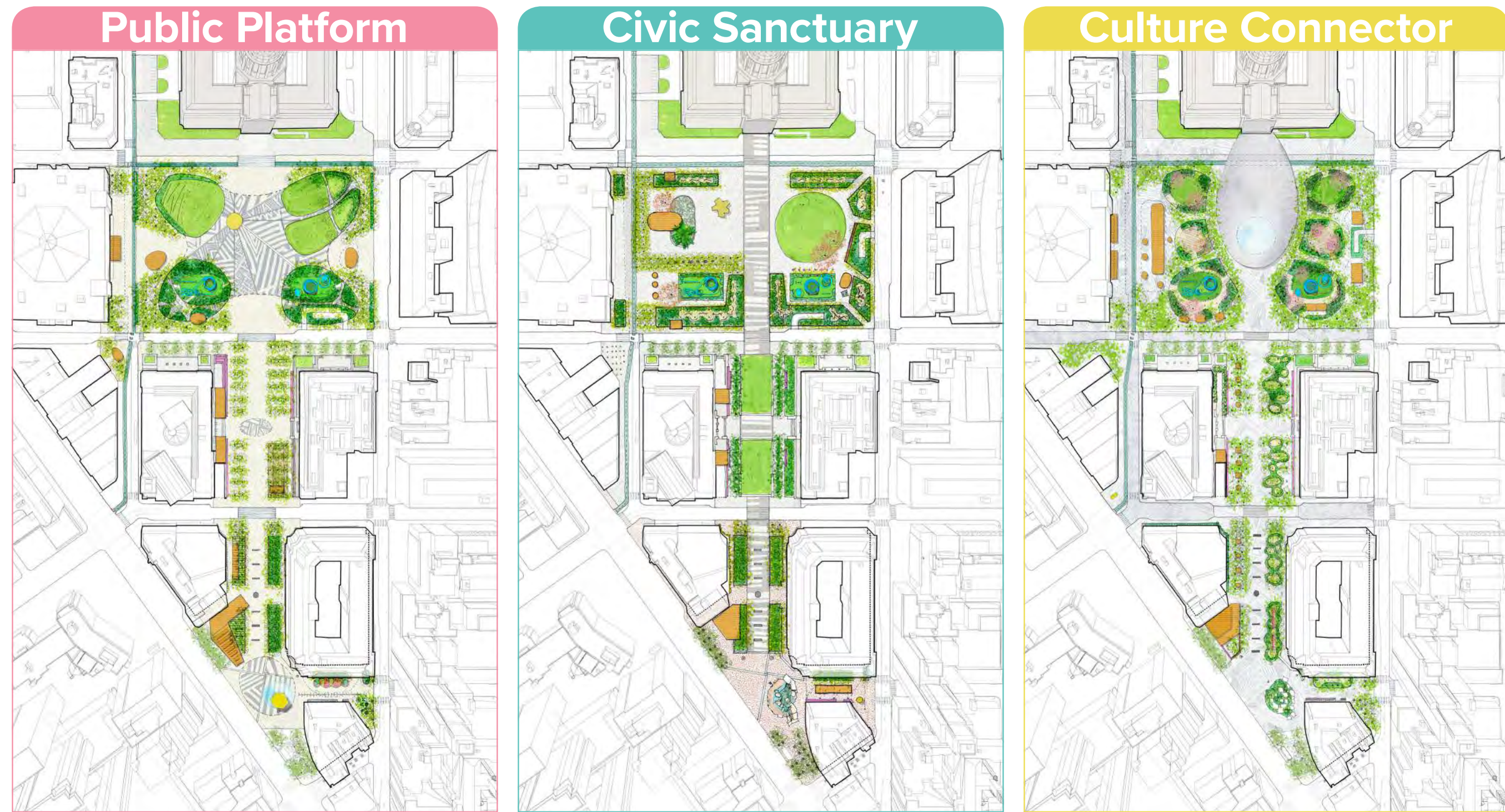
Spring 2018

Over 140 people attended the plan's second workshop/open house where "framework plans" were shared illustrating three different approaches to Civic Center's public spaces: "Culture Connector", "Civic Sanctuary" and "Public Platform." Two options for improving Grove and Polk streets were also shared at the workshop. Attendees were given an opportunity create their own framework plan by piecing together favorite pieces of each framework.

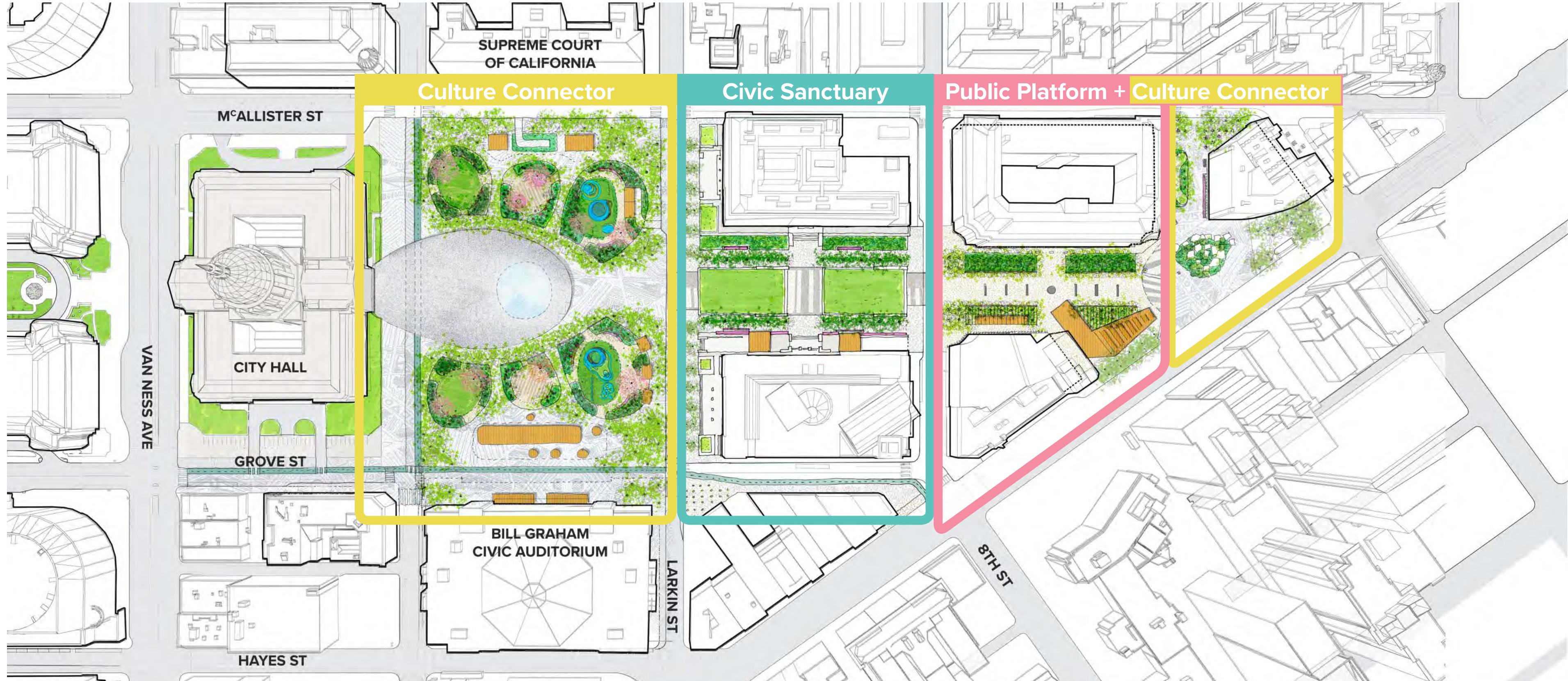
Following the open house, approximately 200 surveys were collected on-site in Civic Center (over 50% non-English) and over 800 individuals responded to an online survey that invited feedback on the three frameworks. In addition, six multi-lingual focus groups were conducted where participants also completed the "favorite plan" activity.



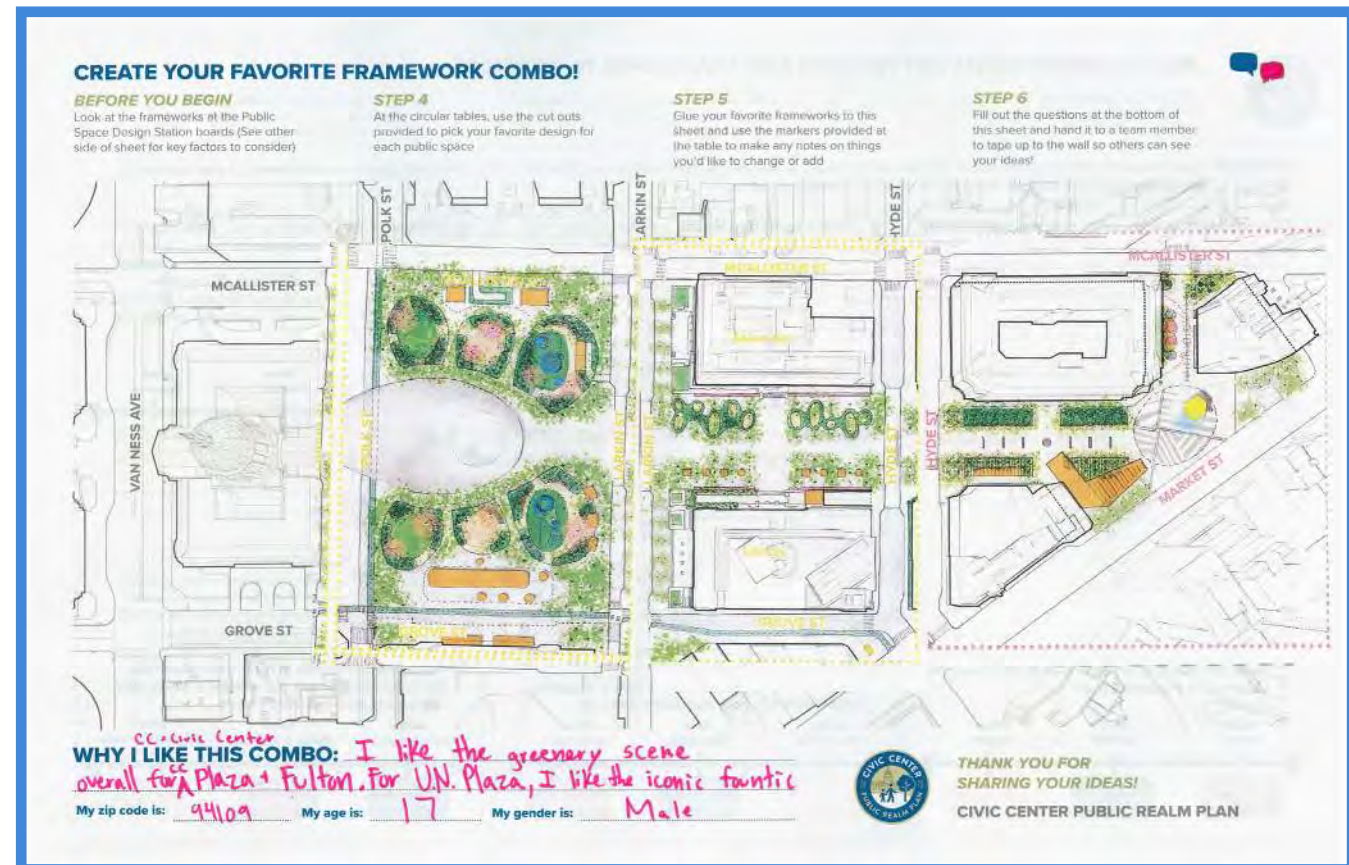
The community was invited to provide feedback on three framework plans for Civic Center's public spaces (illustrated to the right) and street design options during Phase 2 of the plan's concept design development.



### Create Your Favorite Plan Activity



The "Create Your Favorite Plan" activity helped the design team weigh general preferences for the design of each of Civic Center's public spaces. The preferred framework for each public space is shown in the diagram above.

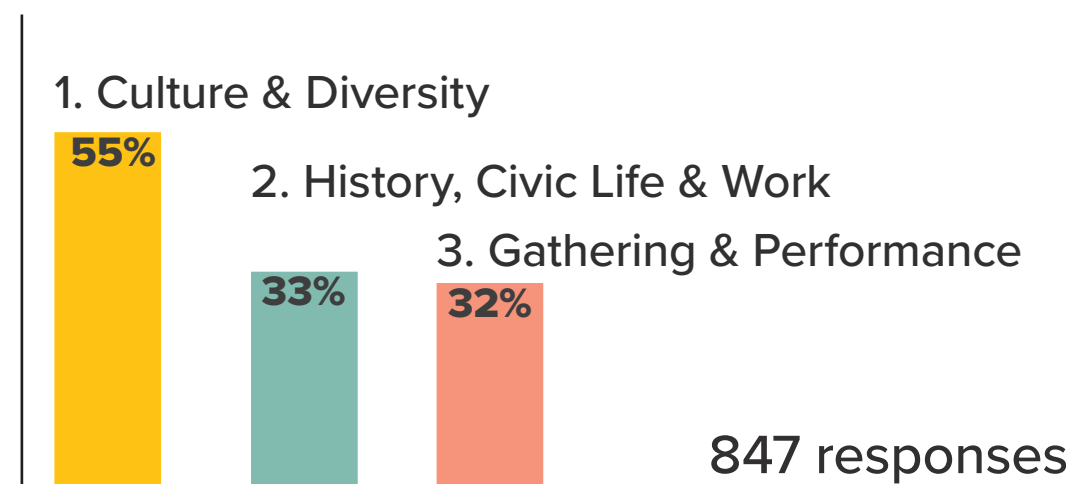


Community members used three framework designs for Civic Center to help create their ideal plan for its three major public spaces.

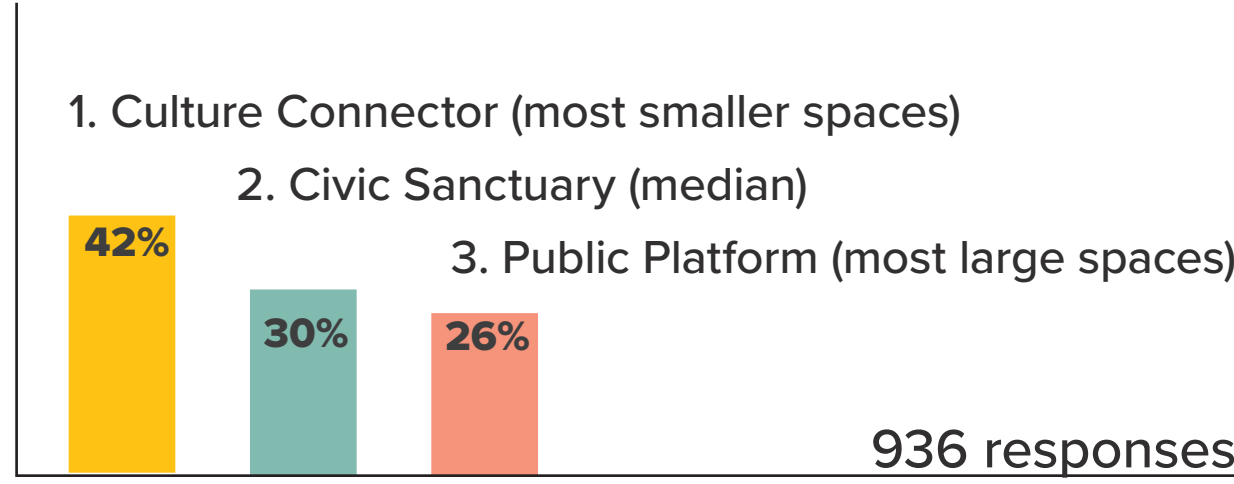
Framework Activity Preferences Summary						
Space:	Civic Center Plaza		Fulton Mall		UN Plaza	
Public Platform	48.5	36%	28	22%	61.5	46%
Civic Sanctuary	24	18%	50	40%	29.5	22%
Culture Connector	61.5	46%	47.5	38%	42	32%
	134	100%	125.5	100%	133	100%

Results of the framework activity.

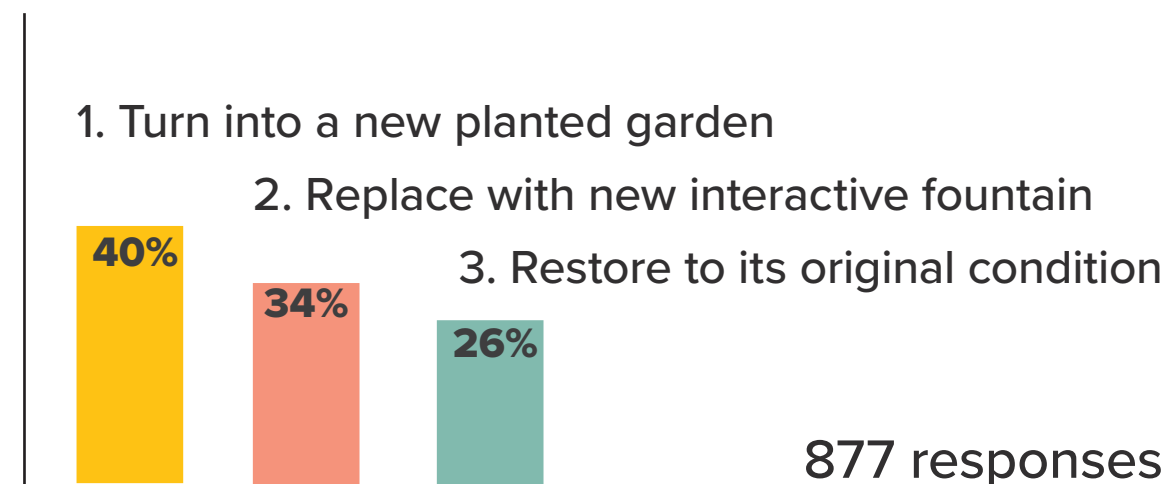
**Which set of themes do you think should be emphasized the most in the design of Civic Center Commons?**



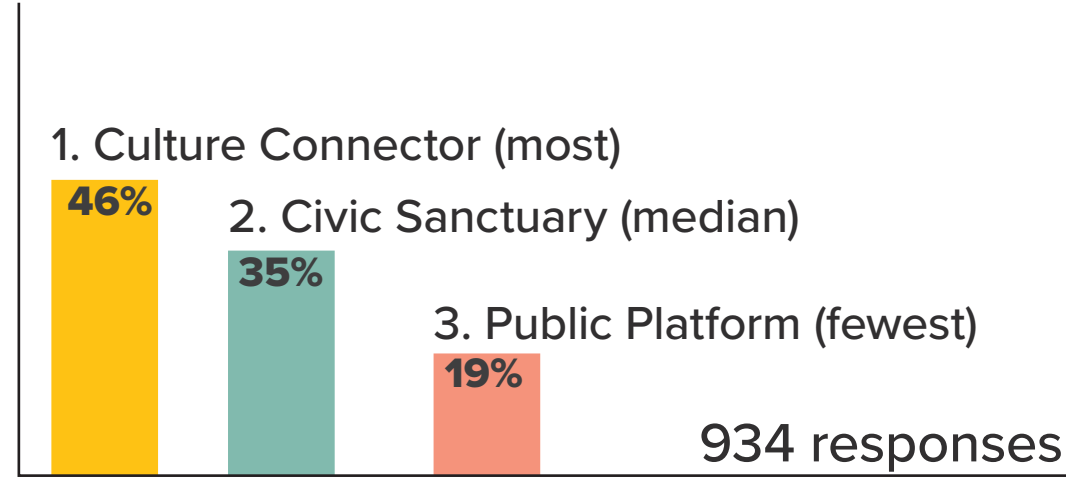
**The design for Civic Center Plaza must balance the amount of large spaces for major events (lawns, paving) with smaller spaces for everyday use (playgrounds, planted areas). Which design strikes the right balance between large spaces for events and smaller spaces for everyday use?**



**The fountain is a key feature of UN Plaza, but has long-standing maintenance, use, and design issues. Select your preferred approach to its design:**



**Trees and planting are important features of nature in the city that can also buffer from wind and provide shade. However, trees and planting can limit flexible space for other uses. Which draft design best represents the ideal amount of trees and planted areas?**



Examples of survey questions and results conducted after Workshop #2. These results informed the creation of the draft concept plan for Civic Center.



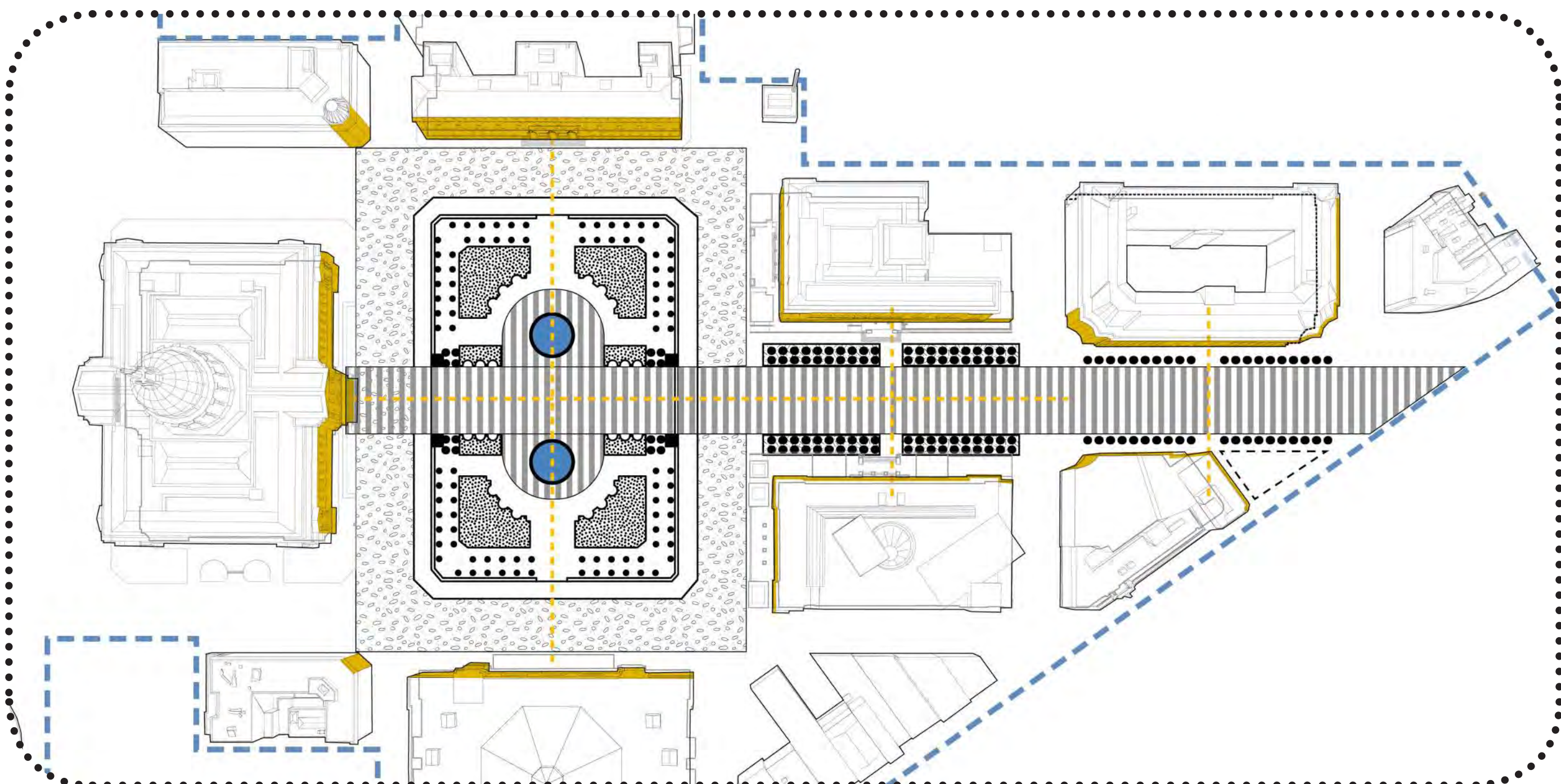
# Civic Center Public Realm Plan: Public Space Framework



## HISTORIC DISTRICT COMPATIBILITY

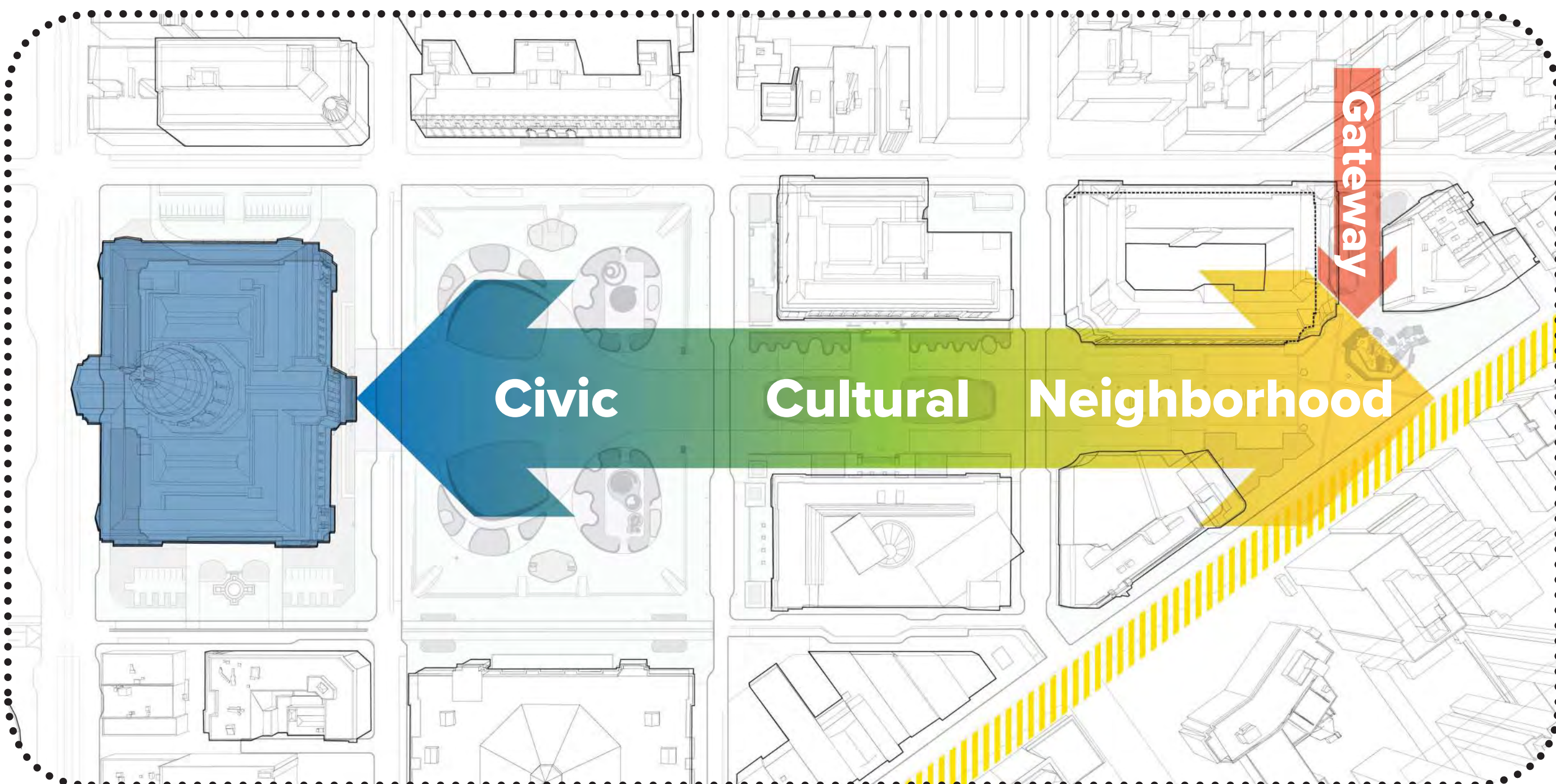
1912 ORIGINAL PLAN

- Historic Facades
- Civic Promenade
- Tree Frame
- Garden Rooms
- Fountains
- Ceremonial Street
- Axial Relationships
- Landmark District



## IDENTITY

AN INVITING PLACE FOR EVERYBODY



## LIGHTING

A NIGHTTIME DESTINATION

- Mast Lights
- Facade Lighting
- Pedestrian-Scale Street Lamps
- Overhead Light Canopy
- Garden / Intimate Lighting
- Inset Lights
- Entry Thresholds
- City Hall Lights
- KARL Light Installation



## PLANTING

ACCESS TO NATURE & BEAUTY

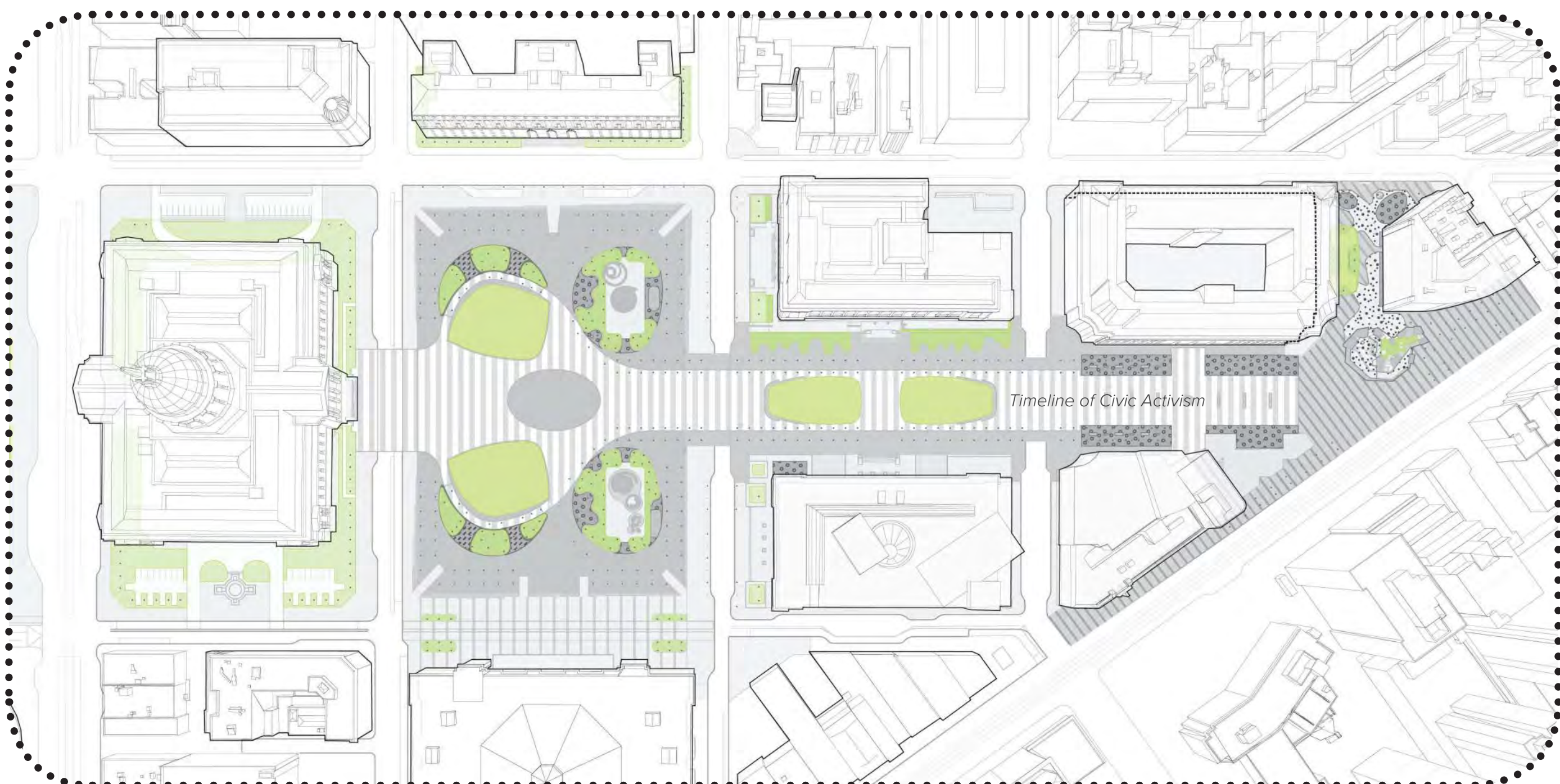
- Deciduous-Civic Promenade
- Broadleaf Evergreen Frame
- Evergreen Canopy Tree
- Flowering Specimen Tree
- Evergreen Accent Tree
- Deciduous Canopy Tree
- District Tree
- Lawn
- Understory / Garden



## PAVING

A UNIFIED PUBLIC REALM

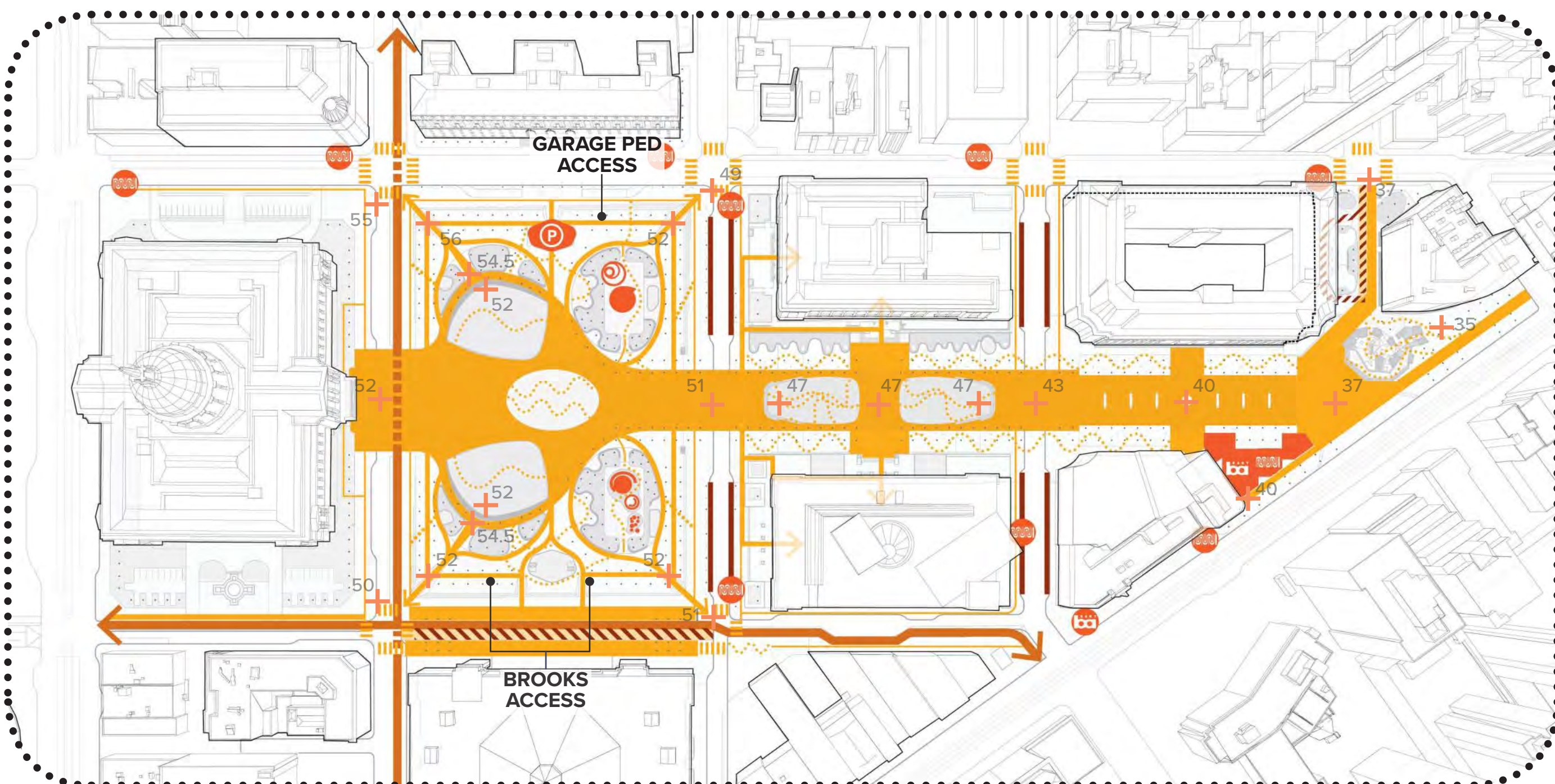
- Civic Promenade
- Plaza Paving
- Neighborhood Rooms
- Garden Rooms
- Special Paving
- Market Street Paving
- Sidewalks
- Planted Areas



## CIRCULATION

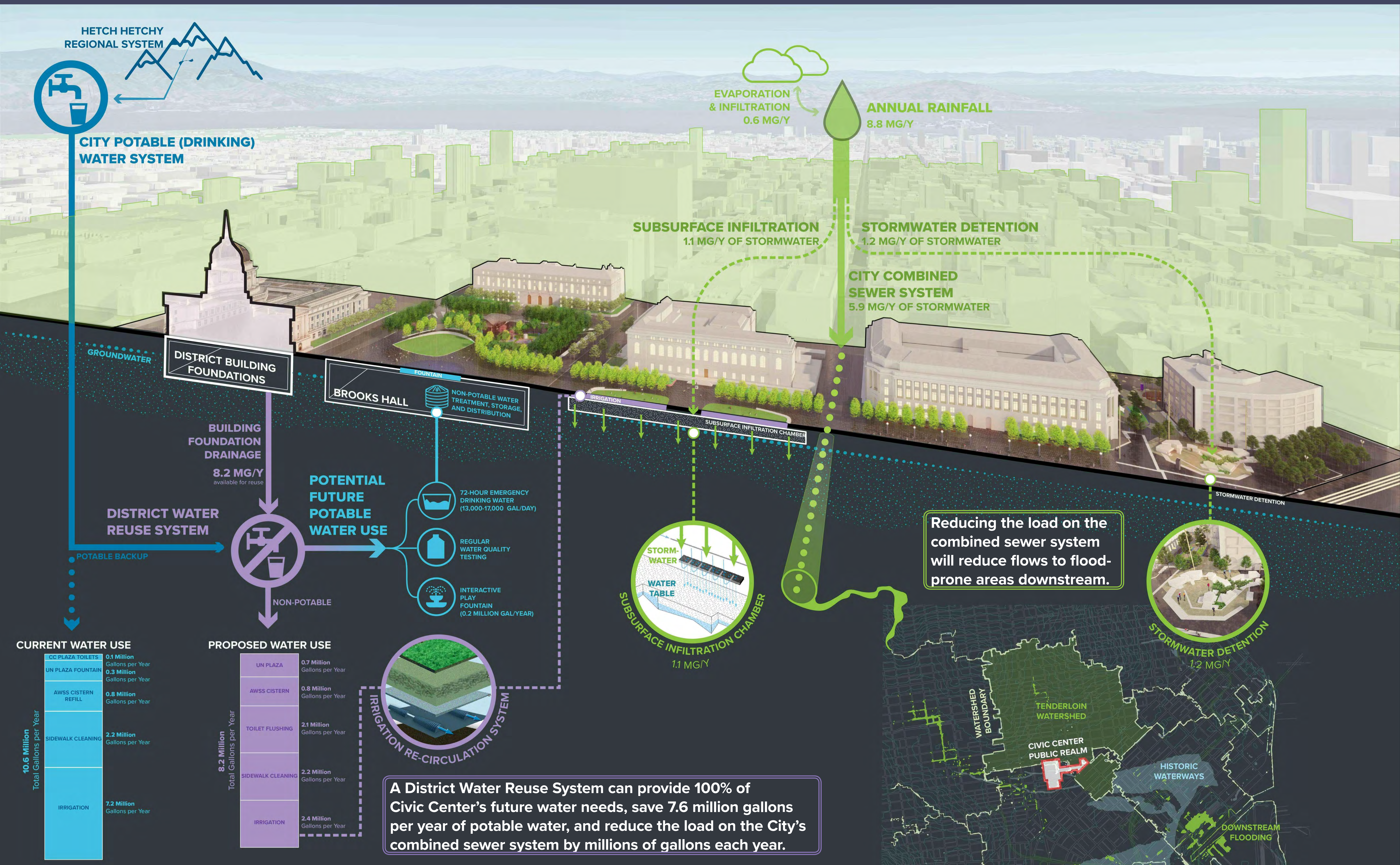
UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY

- Promenade Circulation
- Secondary Circulation
- Tertiary Circulation
- Meandering Walks
- Crosswalk
- Bike Lanes
- Transit Hub
- Parking Garage
- Transit Stop
- Bus Drop Off
- Shared Public Way
- Loading
- Key Spot Elevation



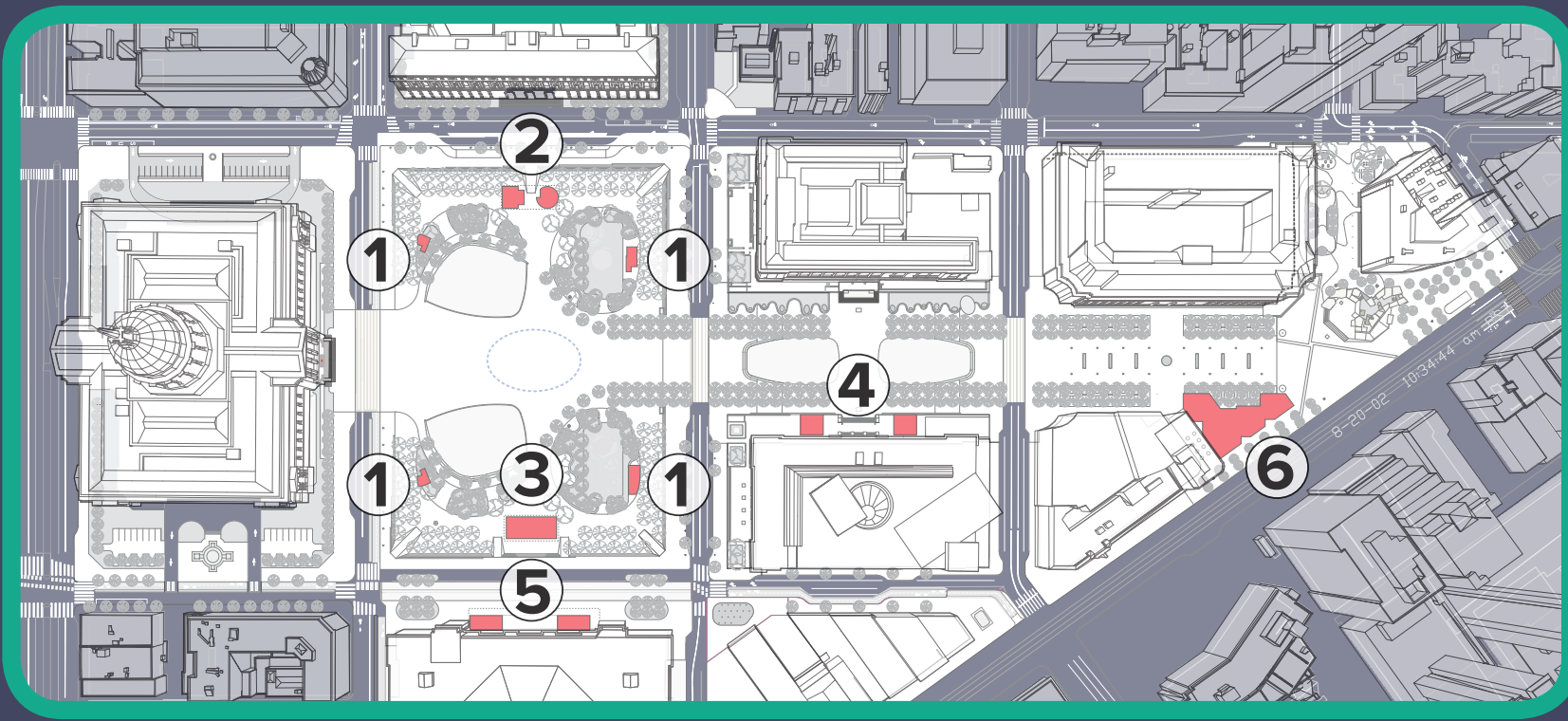


# Civic Center Public Realm Plan: Green Infrastructure



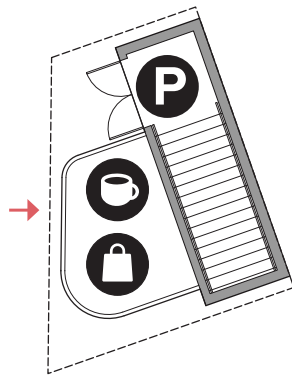


# Civic Center Public Realm Plan: Pavilion Concepts



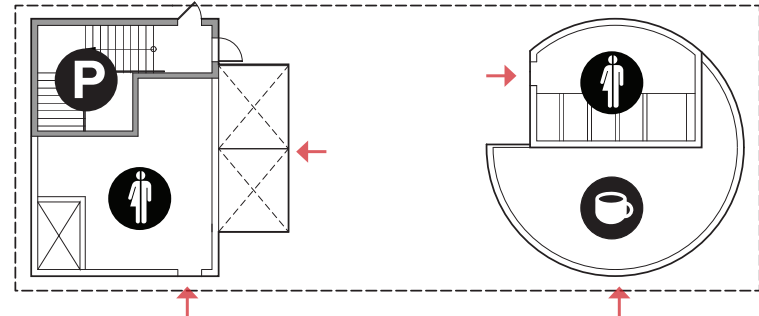
Supports micro-retail and cafe uses, Brooks Hall egress stairs, and public restrooms.

## KIOSKS CIVIC CENTER PLAZA



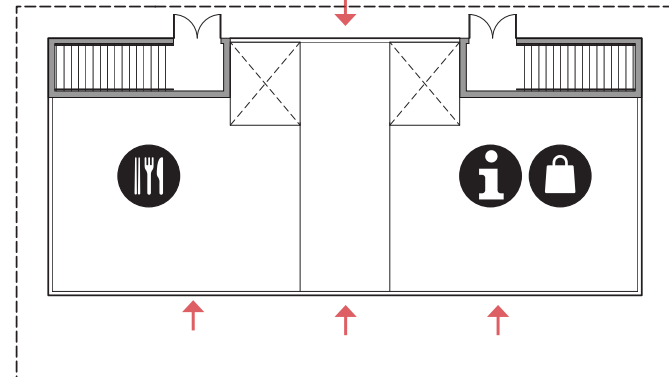
Frames a symbolic gateway to Civic Center Plaza, provides elevators to garage below, a cafe facing the plaza, and public restrooms.

## MCALLISTER STREET PAVILION CIVIC CENTER PLAZA



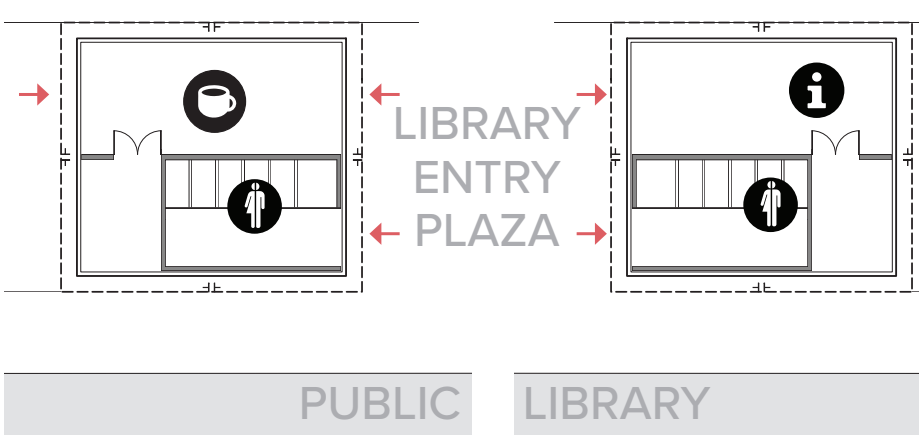
Promotes Arts District events with an information + ticket outlet and cafe with outdoor seating, provides Brooks Hall access.

## GROVE STREET PAVILION CIVIC CENTER PLAZA



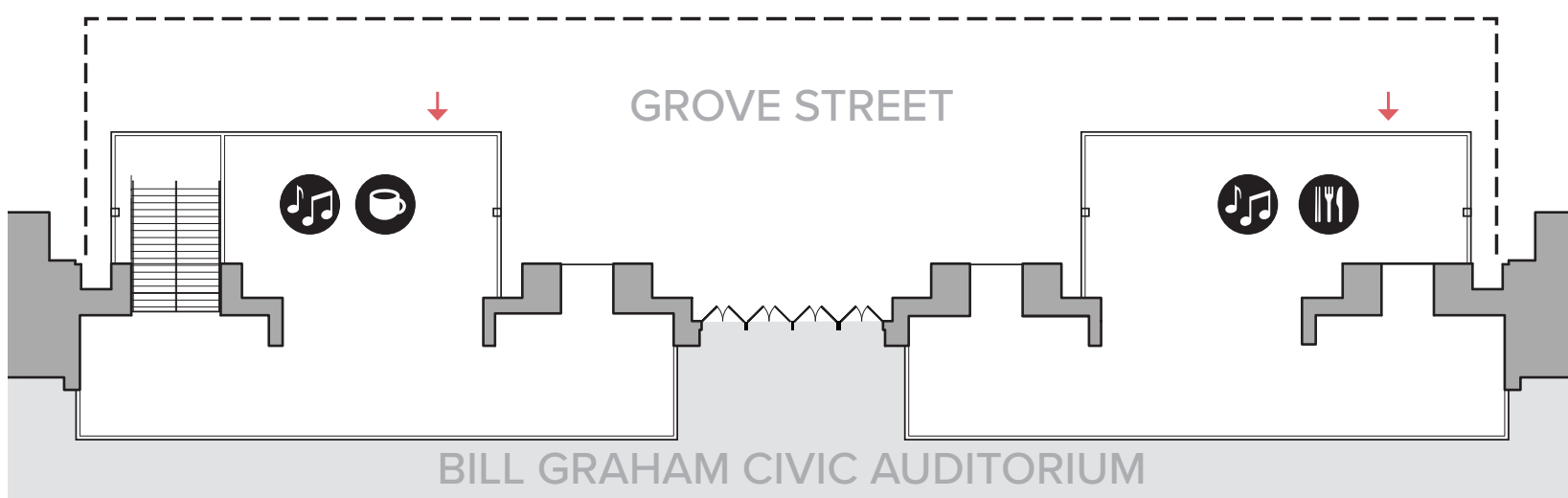
Engages public with cafe/restaurant, public restrooms, and HPS information hub.

## LIBRARY PAVILIONS FULTON MALL



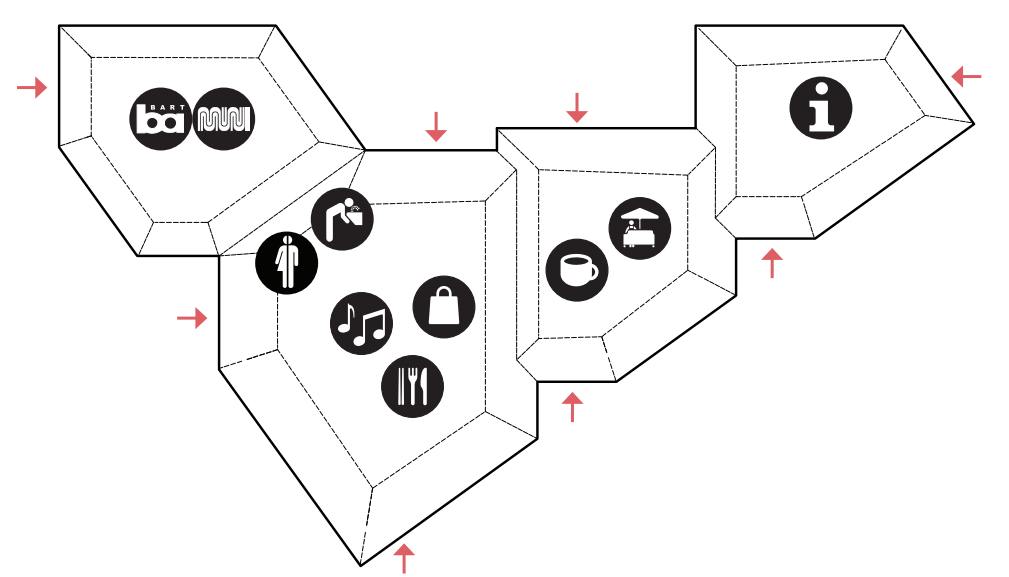
Enhances Bill Graham Civic Auditorium events and Grove Street Promenade with bar/restaurant venues and iconic marquee.

## BILL GRAHAM PAVILIONS CIVIC CENTER PLAZA



Celebrates UN Plaza with a street-level market hall, BART/MUNI access lobby and second level community event space.

## BART MARKET PAVILION UNITED NATIONS PLAZA

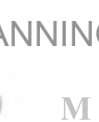
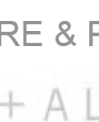




# Civic Center Public Realm Plan



San Francisco  
Planning





# Civic Center Public Realm Plan: Landmark District

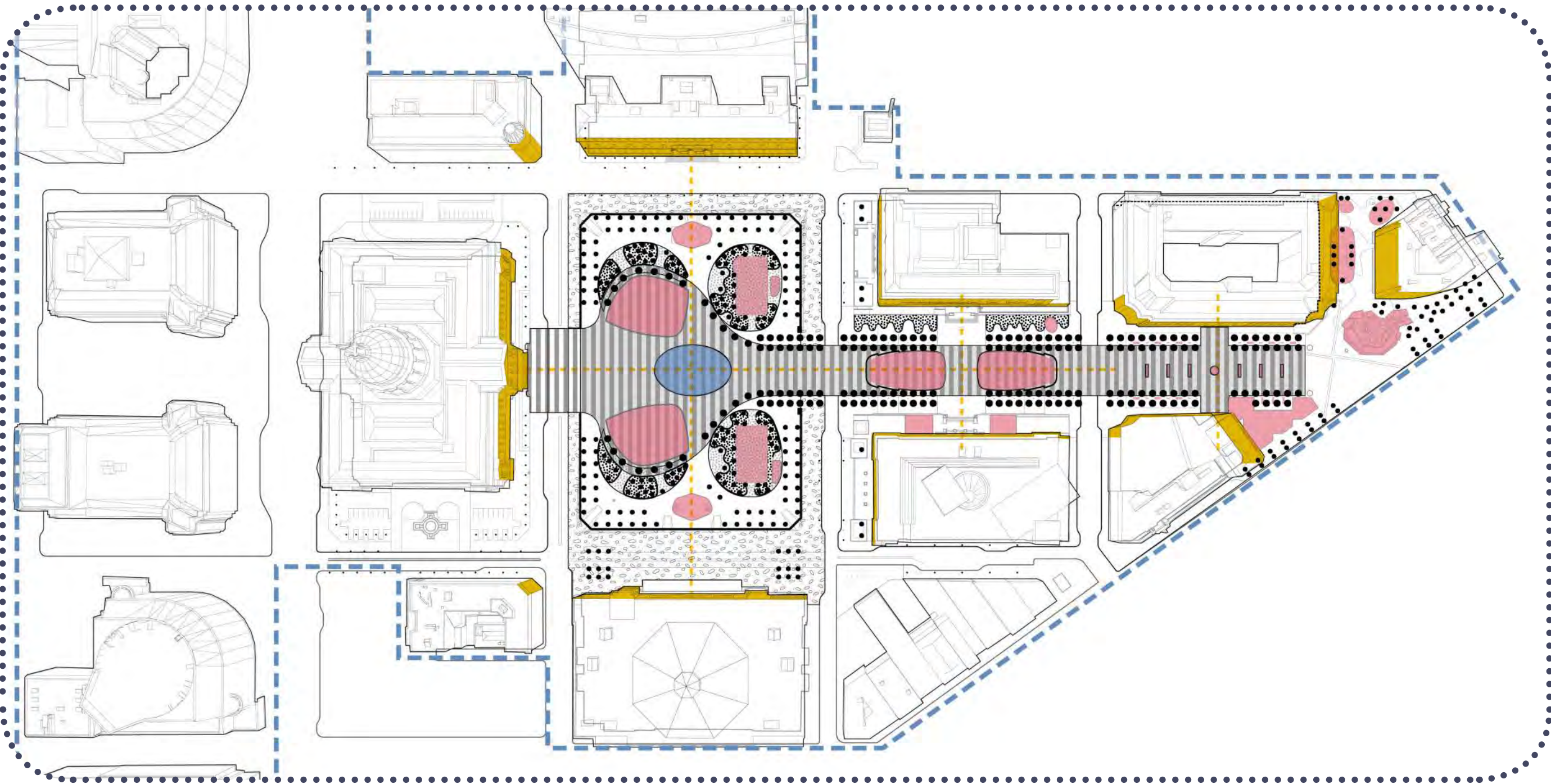


CIVIC CENTER LANDMARK DISTRICT: Founded on the symmetry, axial relationships, and historic elements of the 1912 Beaux-Arts plan, the proposed public realm plan adds new places and uses within a Beaux-Arts frame.



Civic Center has undergone many transformations since its inception in 1912, and has been the site of many significant events.

## A LANDMARK THAT CELEBRATES SHARED HISTORY AND TRADITION

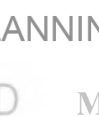


### A BEAUX-ARTS FRAME FOR A CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC SPACE

- Historic Facades
- Civic Promenade
- Tree Frame
- Garden Rooms
- New Invitations
- Fountains
- Ceremonial Street
- Axial Relationships
- Landmark District



San Francisco  
Planning





# The City’s cultural heart and political hub

El centro cultural y el corazón político de la Ciudad    本市的文化大本營和政治中心    Sentrong pangkultura at politikal na puso ng Lungsod



**FULTON MALL:** The Fulton-facing entrances to the Library and Asian Art Museum will be made accessible and the porches made active, with new pavilions and services, an outdoor reading room, a new sculpture garden, and ample seating that enable these important institutions to spill out and activate the public realm.



# A flexible, accessible, inviting place for all to gather

Un espacio flexible, accesible y acogedor para que todos se reúnan    一個靈活變通、無障礙、吸引所有人聚集於此的空間    Espasyo na napag-iiba-iba ang gamit, madaling puntahan, nakapanghihikayat, at puwedeng magtipon ang lahat



CIVIC CENTER PLAZA: Garden rooms framing new lawns and the Playgrounds create a lively, verdant frame for a large gathering space centered on City Hall. A mirror fountain provides an informal place to play during the day, but can be turned off during civic events.



# A source of beauty, delight, and wellness

Una fuente de belleza, alegría y bienestar      美麗、愉悅和健康的來源      Pinagmumulan ng kagandahan, tuwa, at kagalingan ng katawan at isip

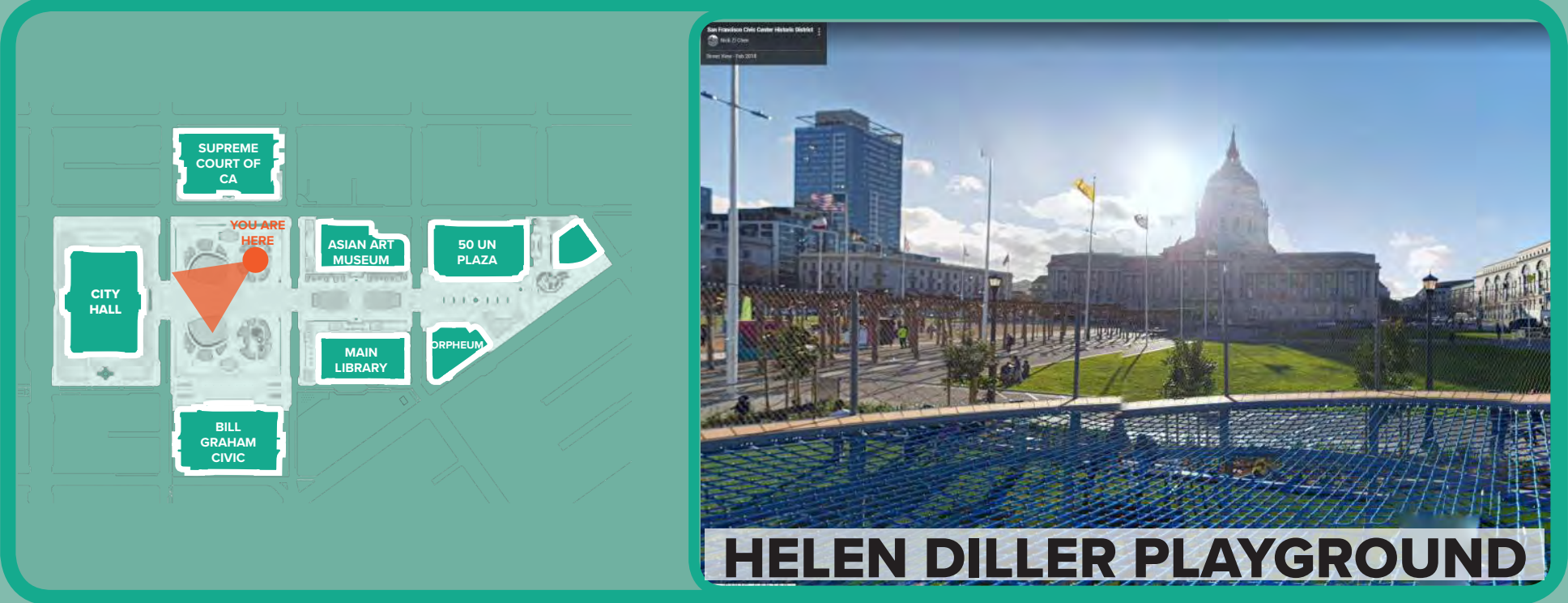


CIVIC CENTER PLAZA: The *Gardens of Delight* expand the presence of the Playgrounds and bring beauty and seasonal character to Civic Center. Ample seating on playful running benches also helps protect new planting areas around the existing Playgrounds.



# A source of beauty, delight, and wellness

Una fuente de belleza, alegría y bienestar      美麗、愉悅和健康的來源      Pinagmumulan ng kagandahan, tuwa, at kagalingan ng katawan at isip

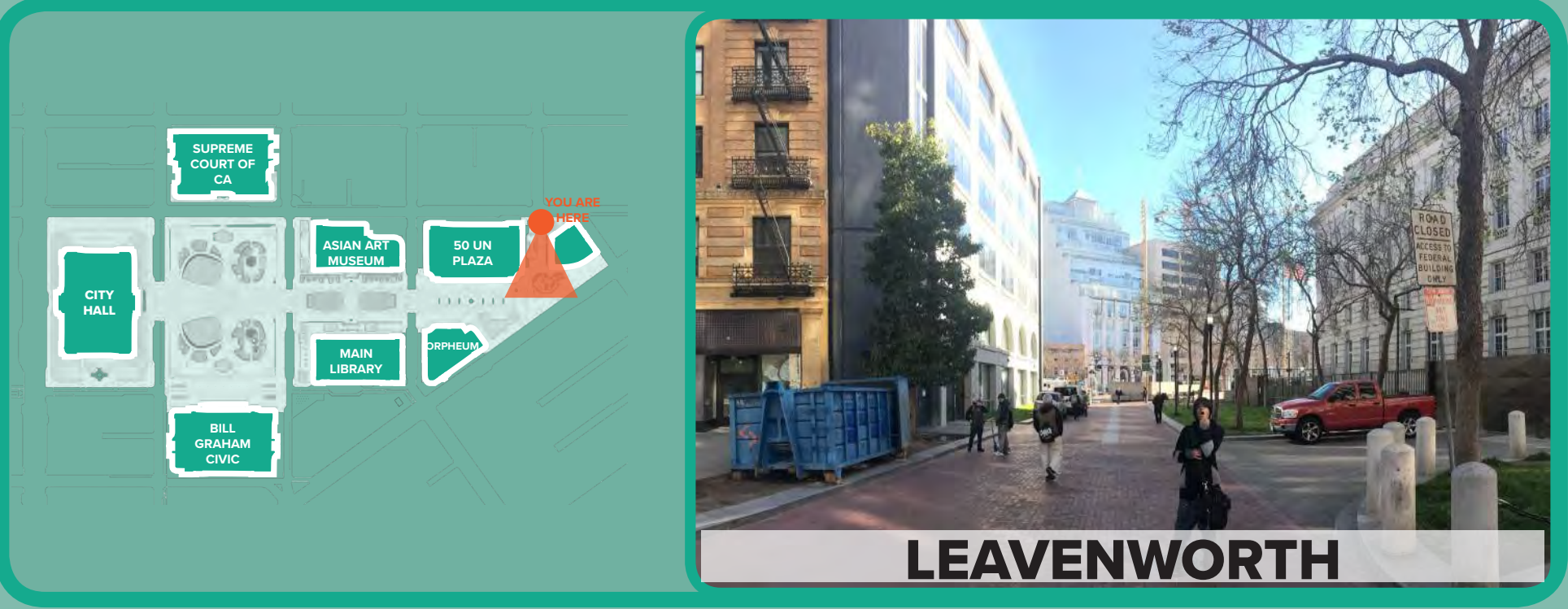


**CIVIC CENTER PLAZA:** Smaller-scale spaces in the Plaza work together to create a vibrant place. For example, the pavilion at McAllister Street provides bathrooms, water fountains, food, and Garage access, uses that activate the street and plaza and serve visitors to the Playgrounds and Gardens.



# The safest place in San Francisco

El lugar más seguro de San Francisco    三藩市最安全的地方    Pinakaligtas na lugar sa San Francisco

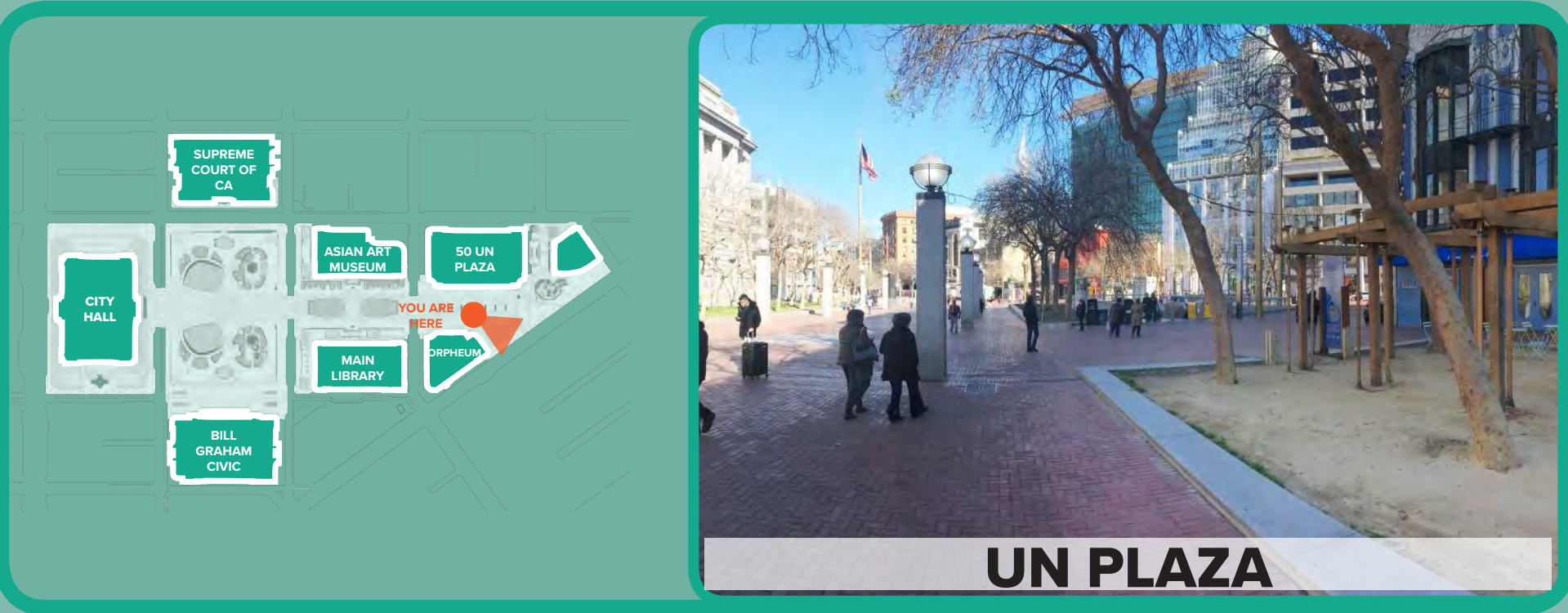


**LEAVENWORTH STREET:** Leavenworth is transformed from forlorn alley to neighborhood park with a dog park, fitness park, community message board, and game tables. Dramatic lighting marks the gateway day and night, and special paving reinvigorates the space as a welcome mat that connects the Tenderloin to Civic Center’s public spaces.



# A generous space that meets the needs of diverse publics

Un espacio generoso que cubra las necesidades básicas de un público diverso    一個寬敞的空間，能滿足多元化大眾的基本需求    Bukas-palad na espasyo na nakatutugon sa mga batayang pangangailangan ng iba't ibang uri ng publiko

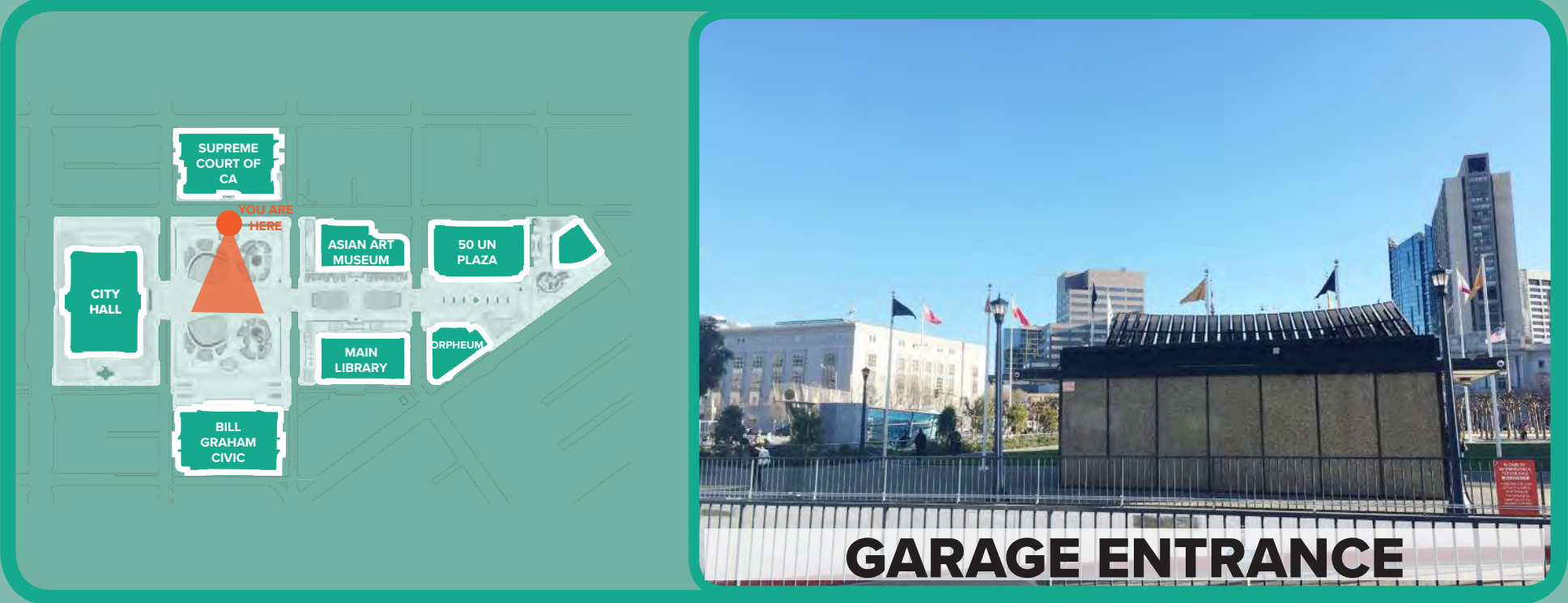


UN PLAZA PAVILION: A new pavilion at the BART station protects and encloses the existing entrance at UN Plaza and provides new uses, such as a market hall and community space, that enliven UN Plaza.



# A landmark that celebrates shared history and tradition

Un lugar emblemático que celebre la historia y tradición comunes    一個具有相同歷史和傳統的地標    Palatandaan o landmark na ipinagdiriwang ang kasaysayan at tradisyon, kung saan kabahagi ang isa't isa



CIVIC CENTER PLAZA - McALLISTER PAVILION: A new pavilion at the Civic Center Garage entrance frames views across the Plaza to Bil Graham Civic Auditorium. The pavilion centralizes pedestrian access to the garage and adds new bathrooms and food/beverage uses that bring activity to McAllister Street and support the Playgrounds.



# A flexible, accessible, inviting place for all to gather

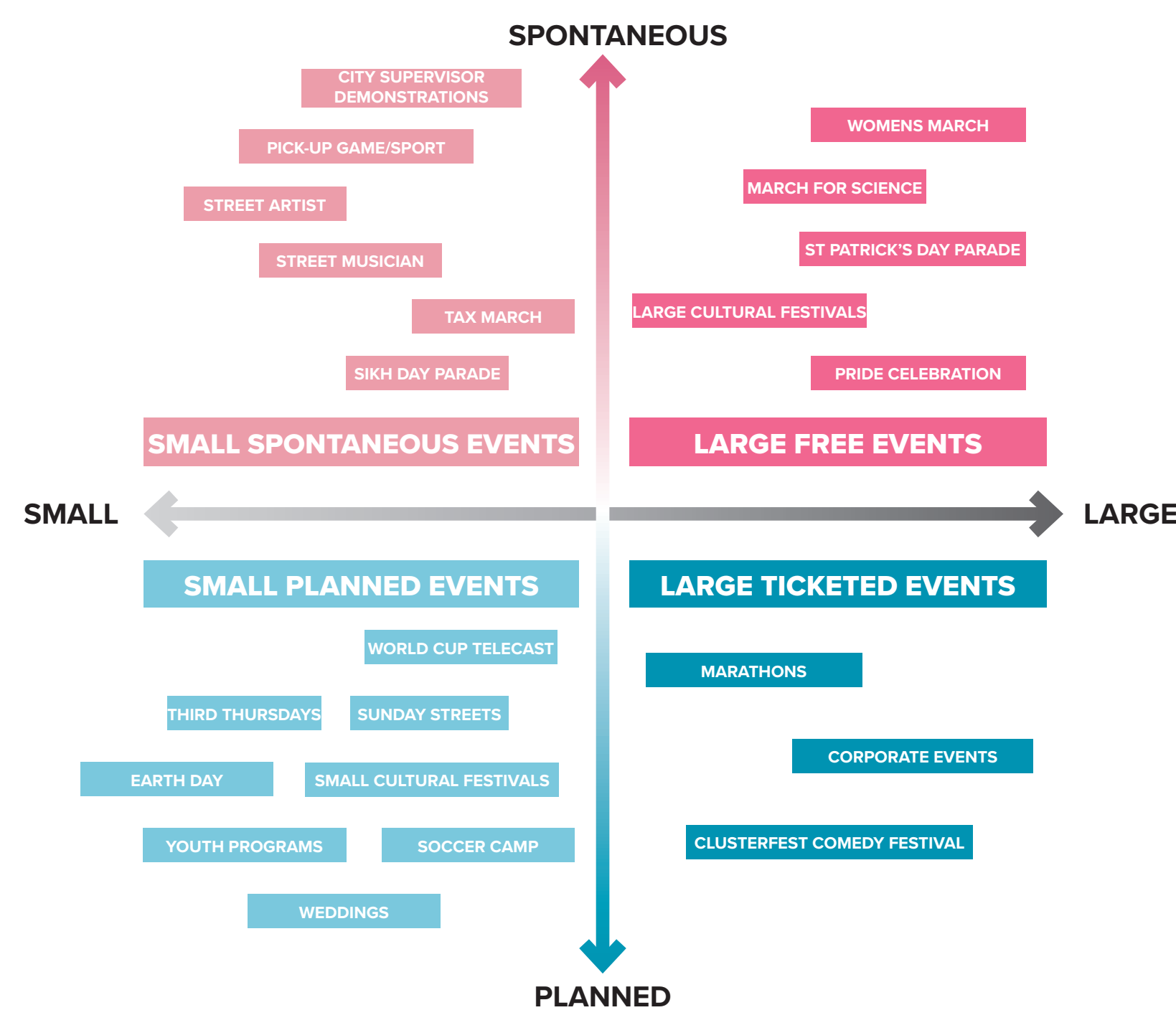
Un espacio flexible, accesible y acogedor para que todos se reúnan

一個靈活變通、無障礙、吸引所有人聚集於此的空間

Espasyo na napag-iiba-iba ang gamit, madaling puntahan, nakapanghihikayat, at puwedeng magtipon ang lahat

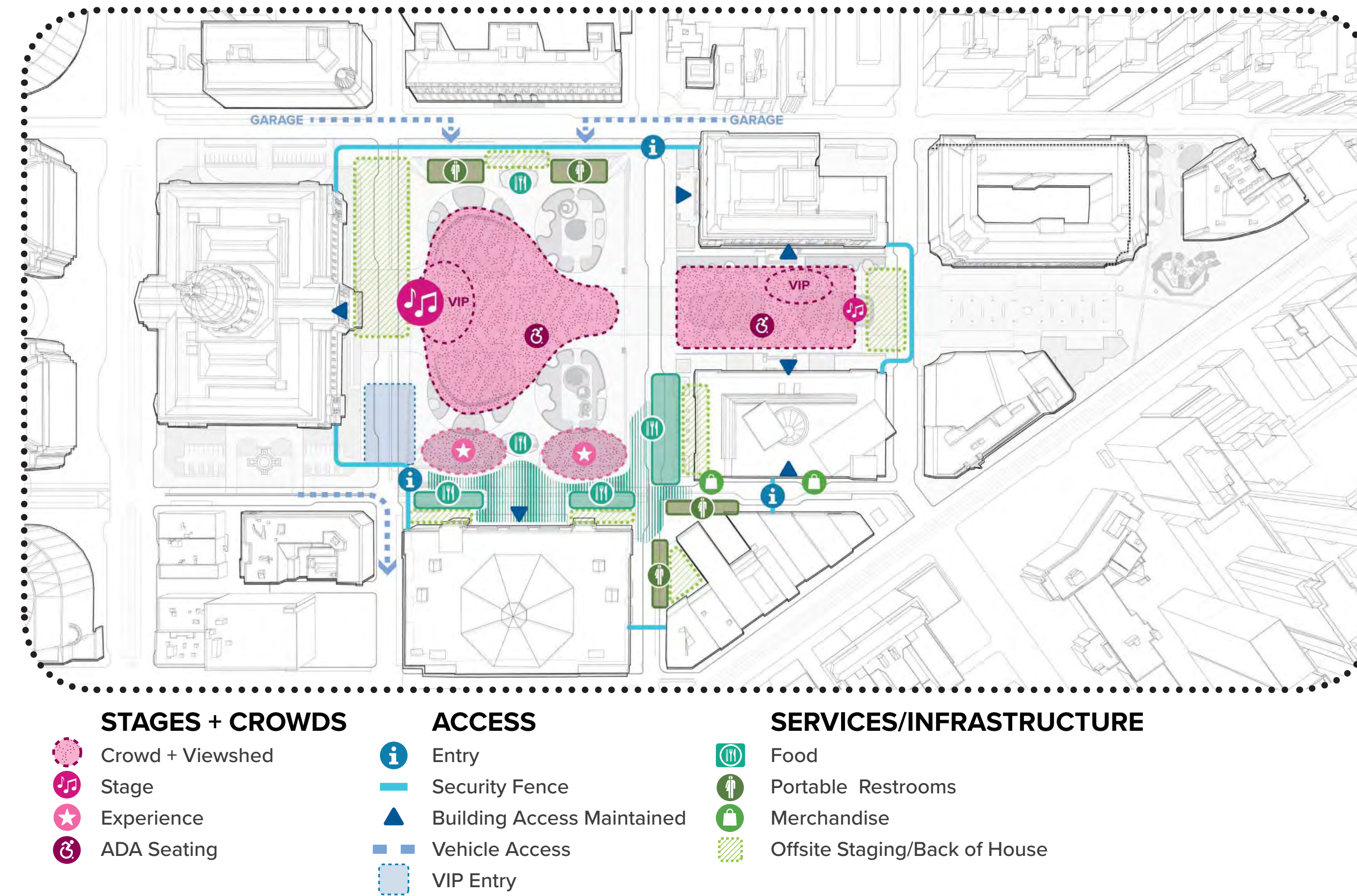


## CIVIC EVENTS OF ALL SIZES

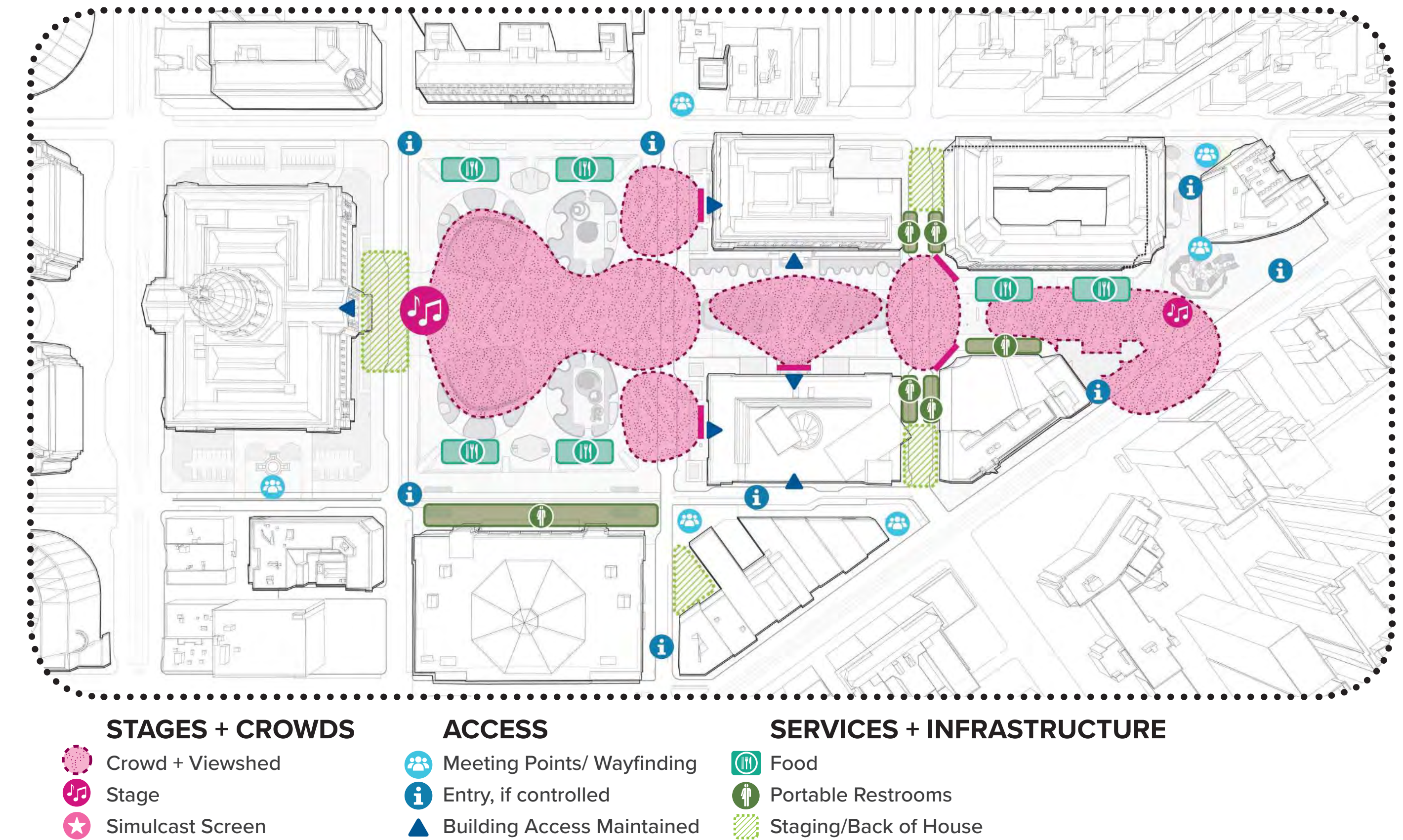


Civic Center's public realm will be designed to welcome civic events of all types and sizes. Two types of large events and their considerations are shown at right.

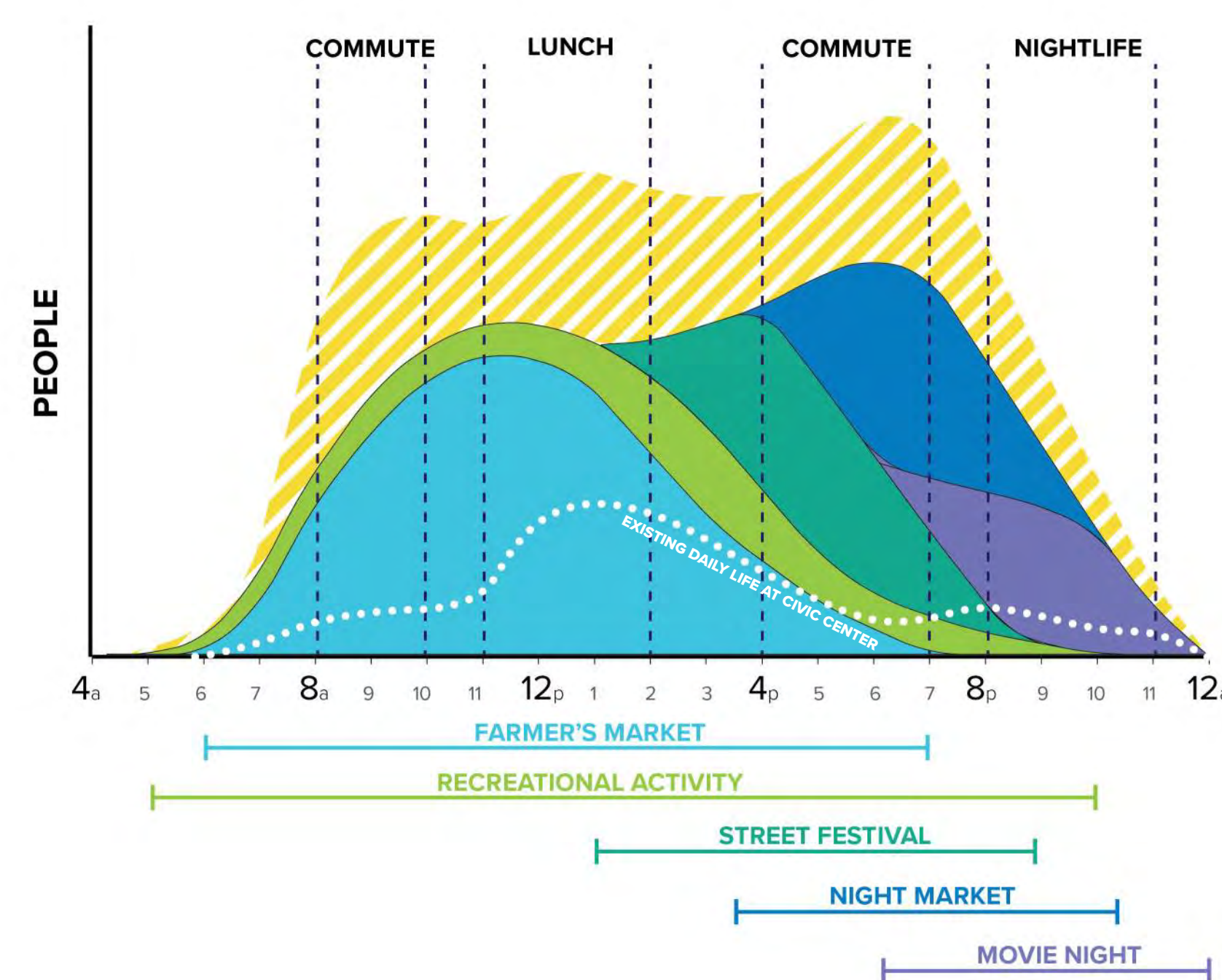
## Large Ticketed Event (e.g. Clusterfest)



## Large Spontaneous Event (e.g. Women's March)

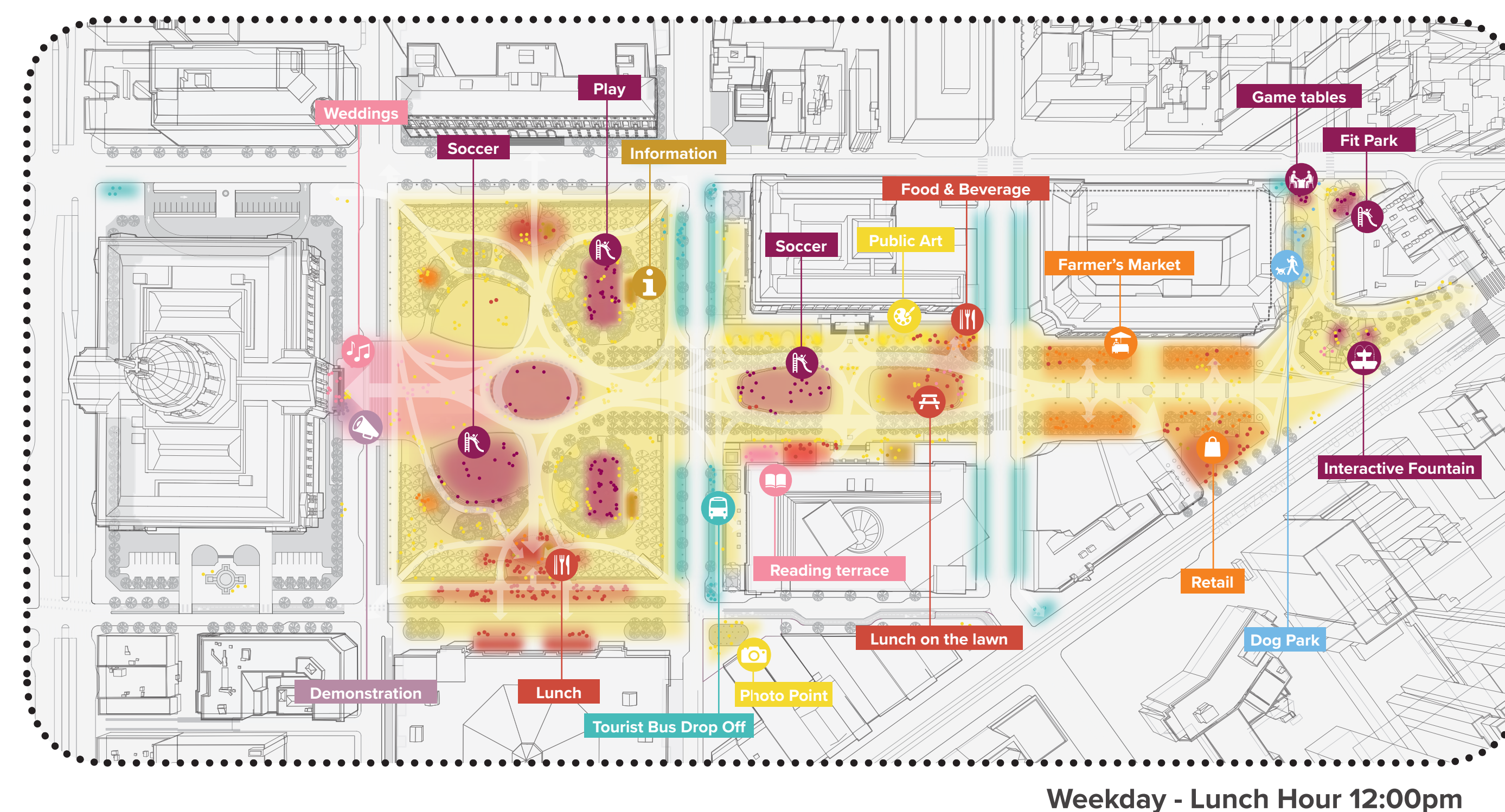


## DAILY LIFE AT CIVIC CENTER



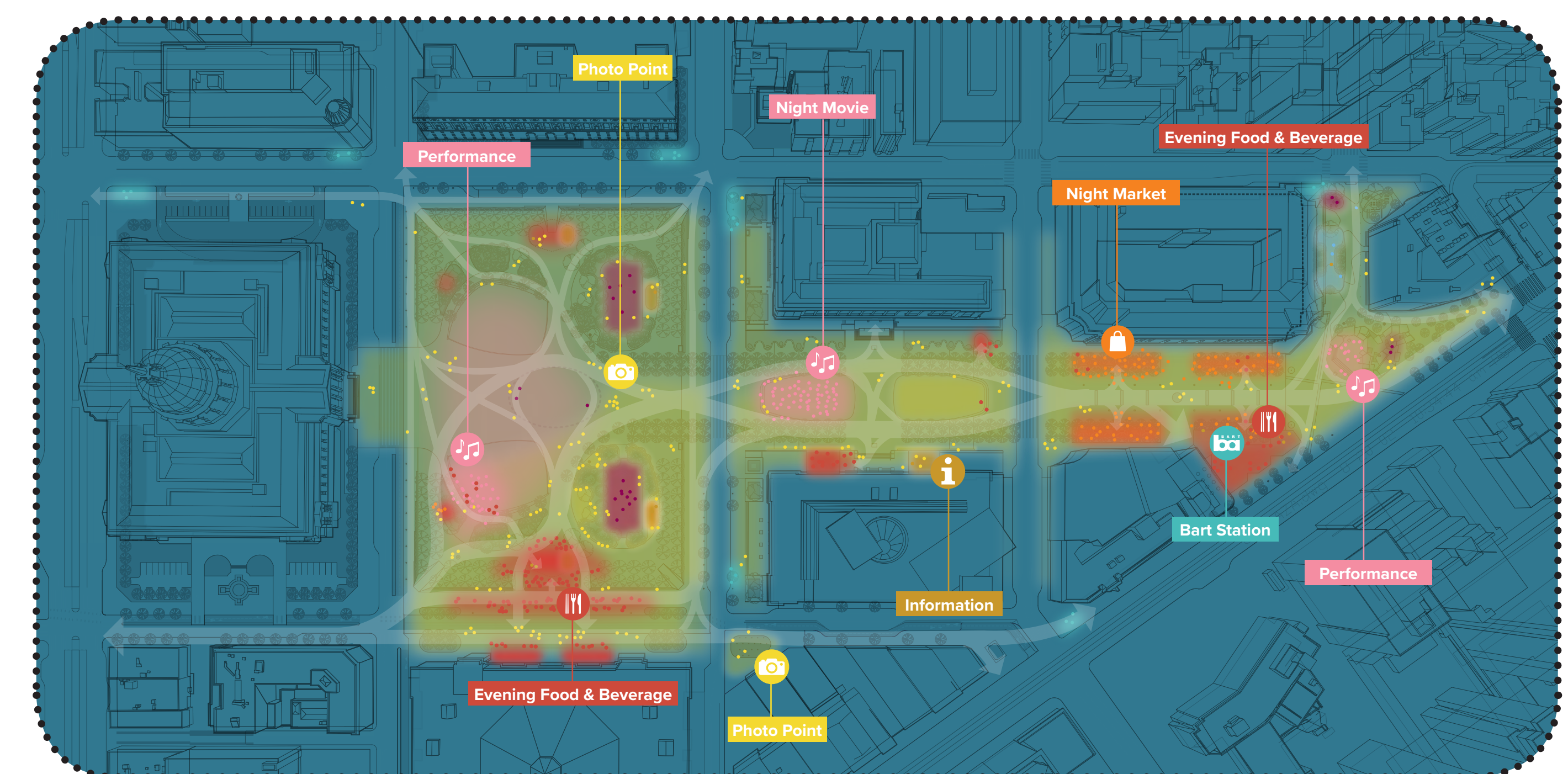
Civic Center's public realm will be designed as a flexible place that welcomes daily life, with diverse activities over the course of the day and evening, weekdays and weekends.

## Daily Life & Activity - Weekday



Weekday - Lunch Hour 12:00pm

## Daily Life & Activity - Nighttime



Weekend - Nightlife 9:00pm

### DAILY LIFE

- Passive - Sitting or Standing
- Waiting for Transit
- Accompanied by Pets
- Eating/Drinking
- Exercise/Play/Recreation
- Commerce
- Political / Religious Advocacy
- Cultural/Performance
- Civic Work

### USES & ACTIVITIES

- Playground
- Games
- Interactive Fountain
- Demonstration
- Food & Beverage
- Picnic
- Retail
- Farmer's Market
- Celebrations/Special Events
- Outdoor Reading Room
- Photo Point
- Public Art
- Bus Stop
- Muni Station
- Bart Station
- Dog Park
- Information
- Passive / Recreation Lawn
- Active Recreation
- Cultural Performance



# A flexible, accessible, inviting place for all to gather

Un espacio flexible, accesible y acogedor para que todos se reúnan

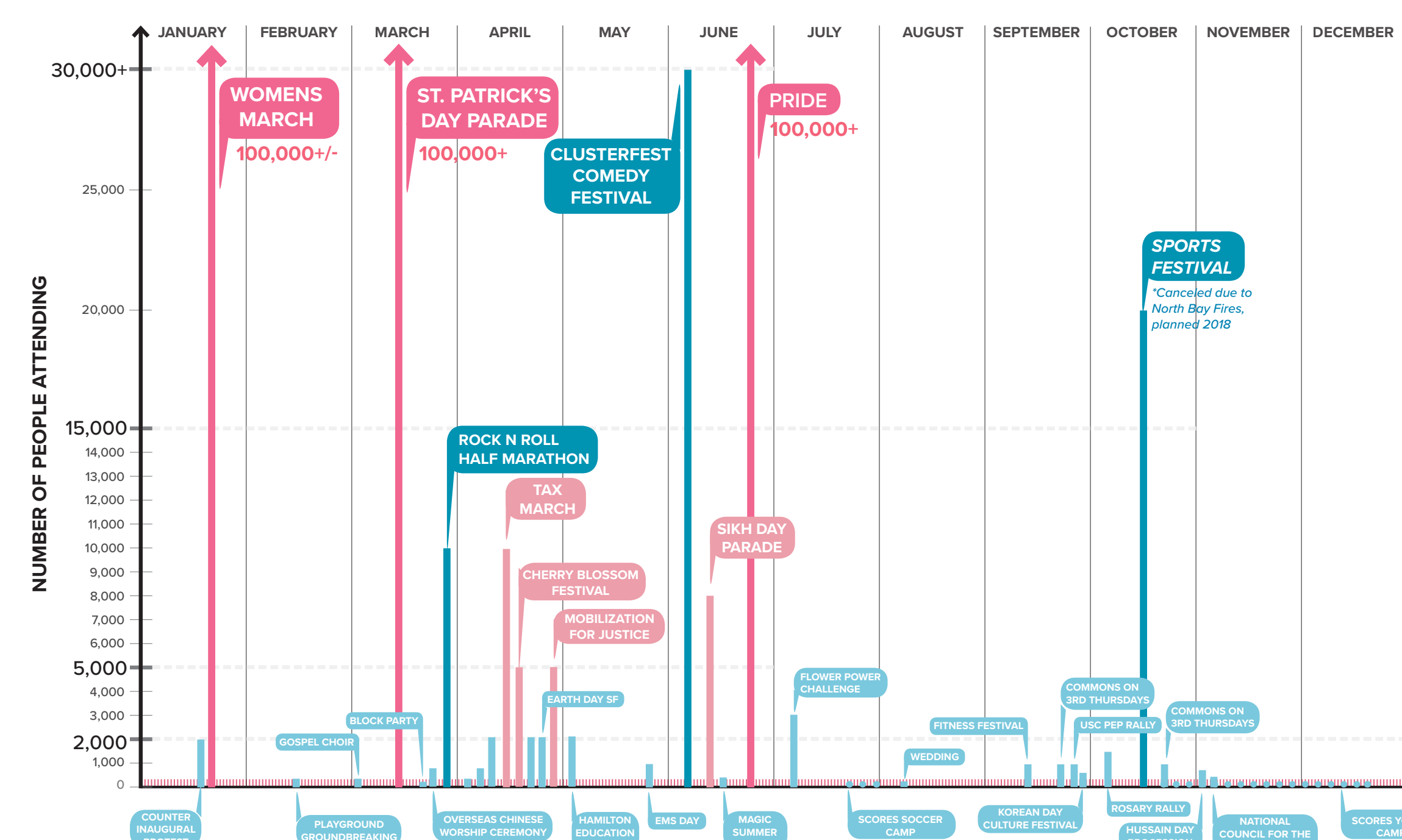
一個靈活變通、無障礙、吸引所有人聚集於此的空間

Espasyo na napag-iba-iba ang gamit, madaling puntahan, nakapanghihiyakat, at puwedeng magtipon ang lahat

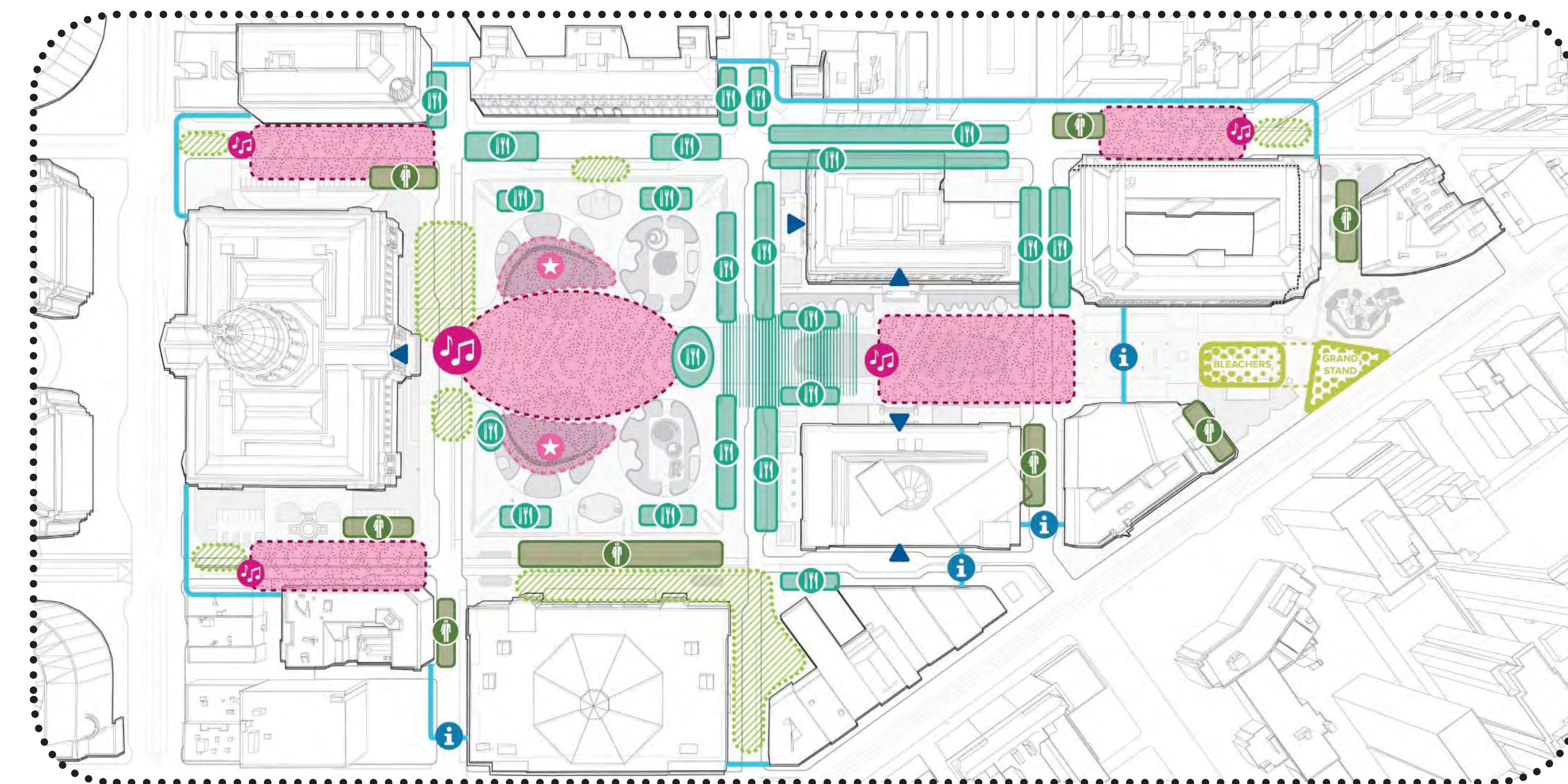


**DISTRICT:** Civic Center's public realm will support large and small public gatherings, celebrations, and demonstrations with clear sight lines between City Hall and Market St, clear access points, and consideration of services and infrastructure.

## A YEAR OF EVENTS (2017)



## LARGE CIVIC EVENT (e.g. Pride Celebration)



### STAGES + CROWDS

- Crowd + Viewshed
- Stage
- Experience

### ACCESS

- Entry Point
- Security Fence
- Building Access Maintained

### SERVICES/INFRASTRUCTURE

- Food
- Portable Restrooms
- Offsite Staging/Back of House



# A generous space that meets the needs of diverse publics

Un espacio generoso que cubra las necesidades básicas de un público diverso

一個寬敞的空間，能滿足多元化大眾的基本需求

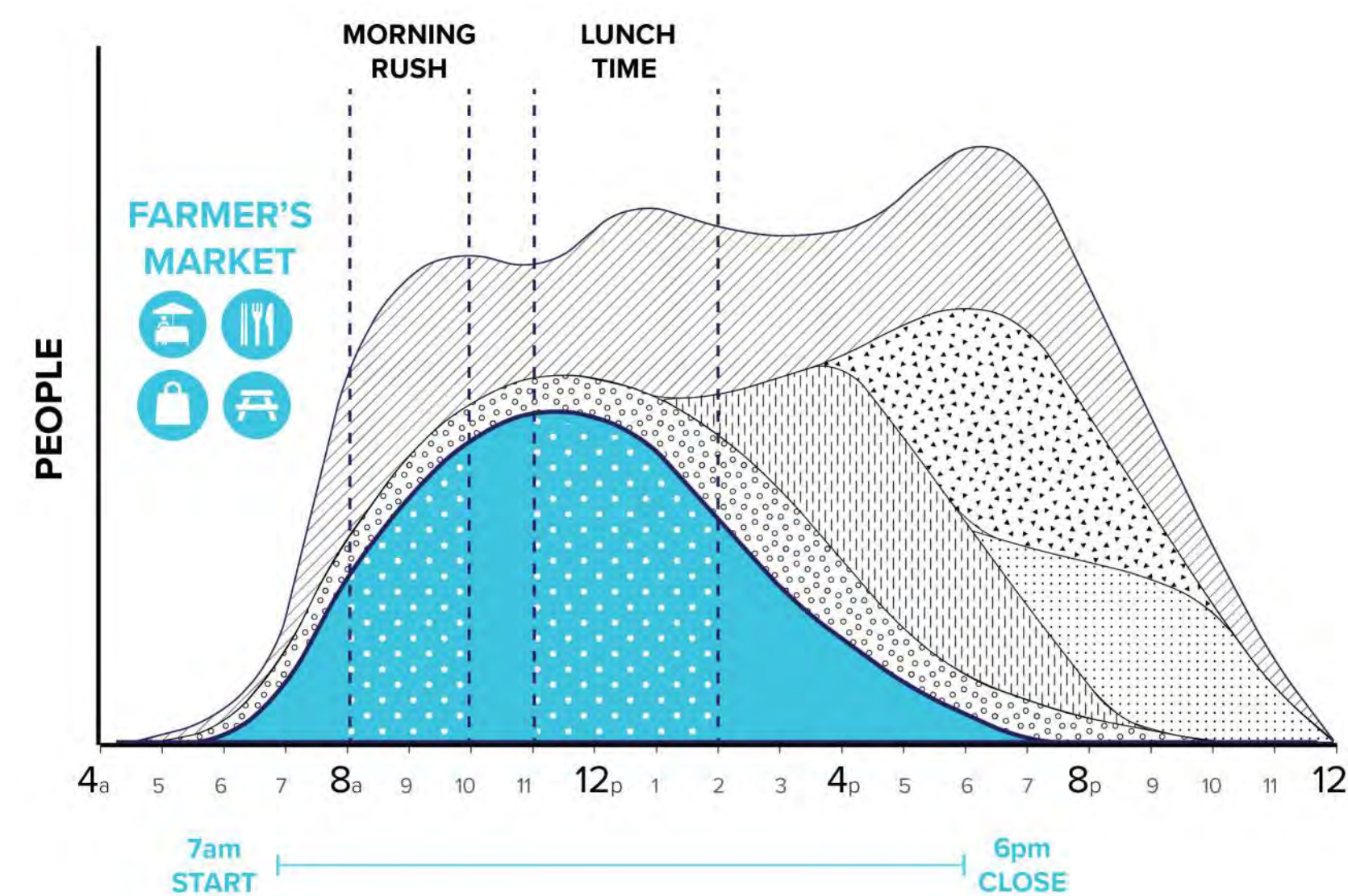
Bukas-palad na espasyo na nakatutugon sa mga batayang pangangailangan ng iba't ibang uri ng publiko



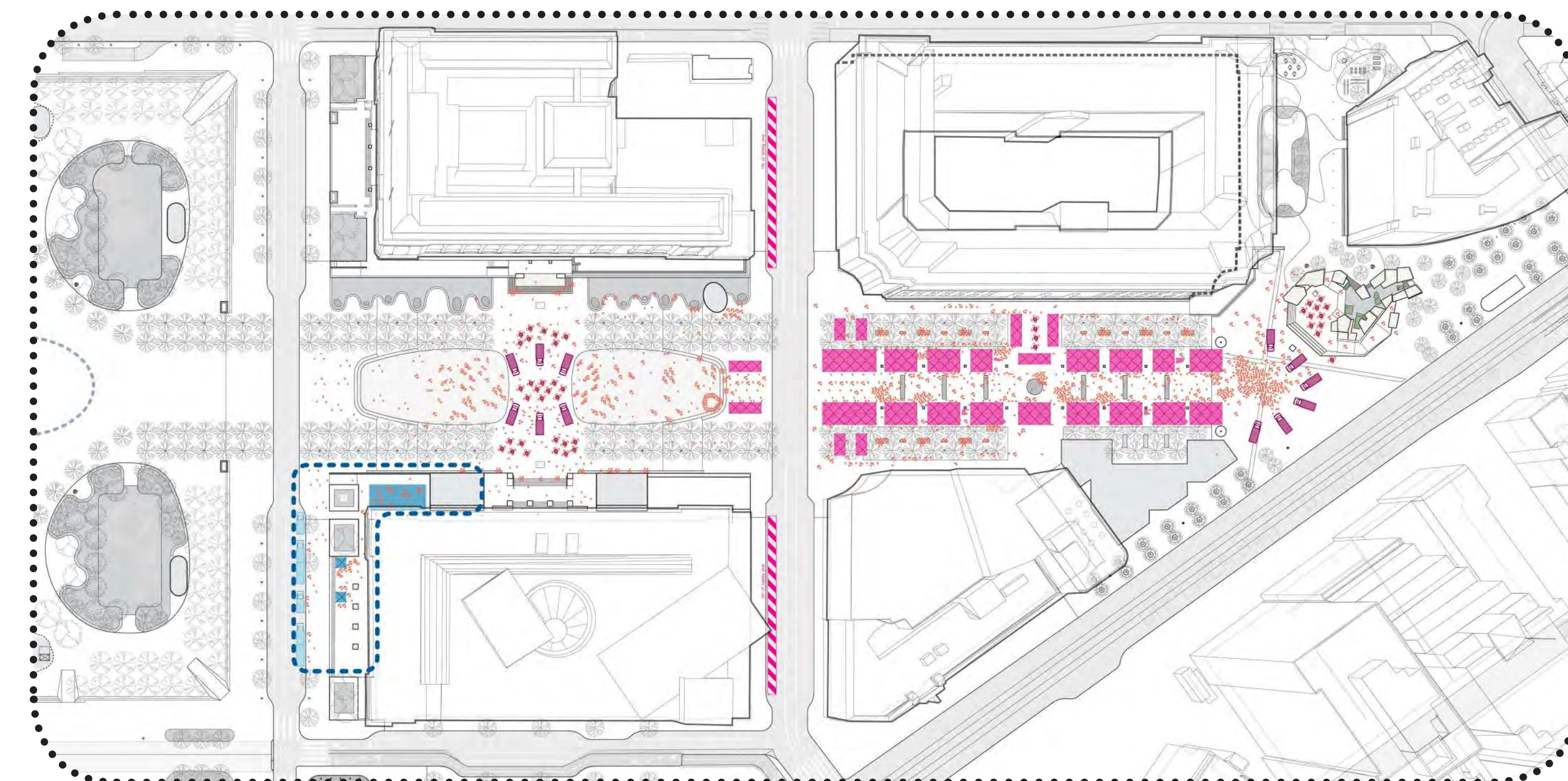
**UN PLAZA:** A civic promenade from Market St to City Hall is a space for commemoration of the UN Charter, the history of Civic Center, and of local/neighborhood heroes. New places to eat and recreate on Leavenworth St and at BART add vitality at the plaza's edges.

## A DAY IN CIVIC CENTER

The Heart of the City Farmers' Market draws activity to UN Plaza from morning-early afternoon. The concept plan for UN Plaza creates a flat market plaza to support potential expansion and/or reconfiguration of the market, well into the future.



## FARMER'S MARKET + CARE VILLAGE



### LEGEND

- Market Tents/Tables
- Commercial Loading
- Off the Grid Food Trucks
- Lava Mae Care Village
- People



# A source of beauty, delight, and wellness

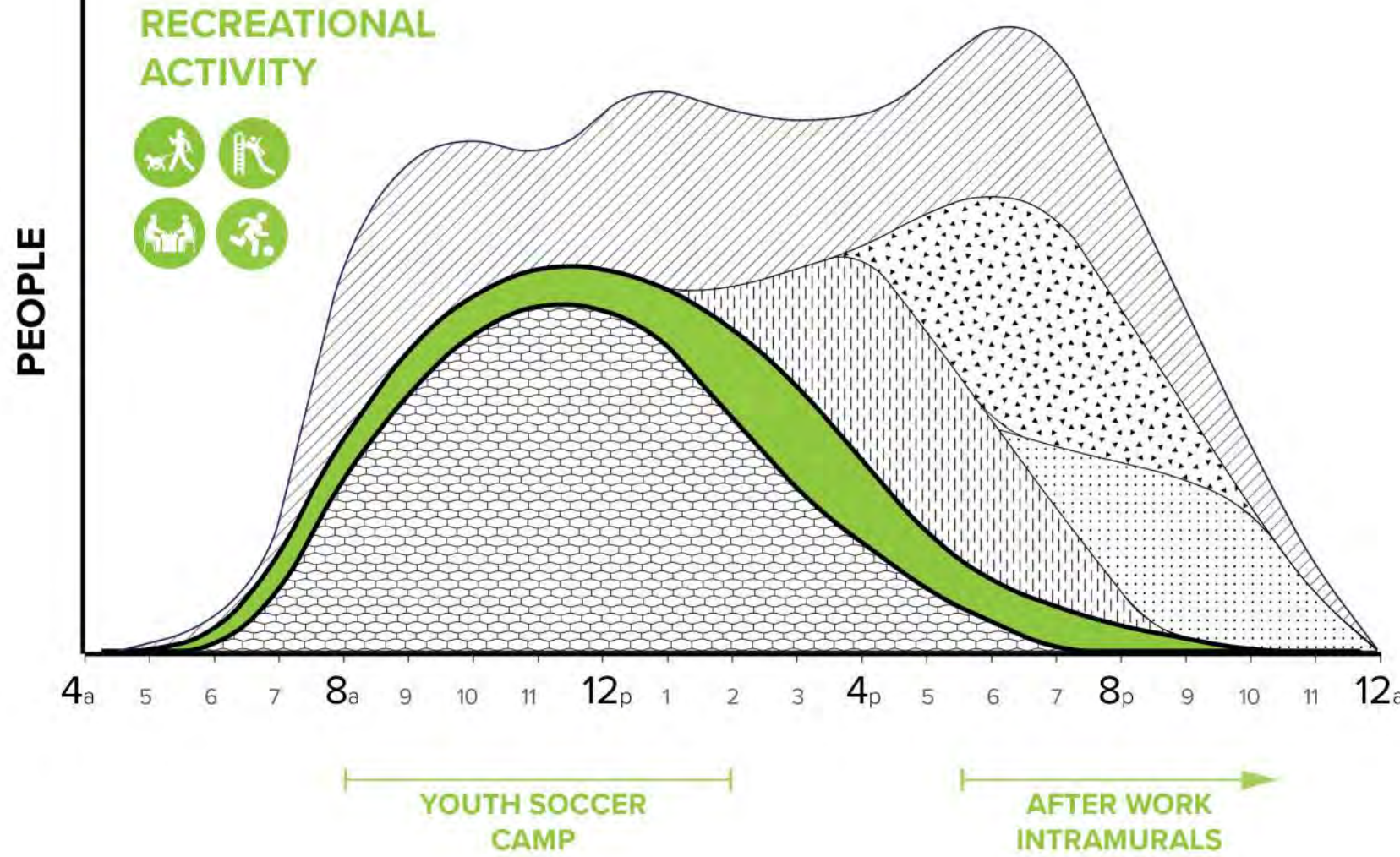
Una fuente de belleza, alegría y bienestar    美麗、愉悅和健康的來源    Pinagmumulan ng kagandahan, tuwa, at kagalingan ng katawan at isip



FULTON MALL: Lawn terraces between the Library and the Asian Art Museum provide a place to play and hang out, and are framed by benches and places to sit in sun or shade. New pavilions and seating on the Library terrace create a quiet place to people-watch.

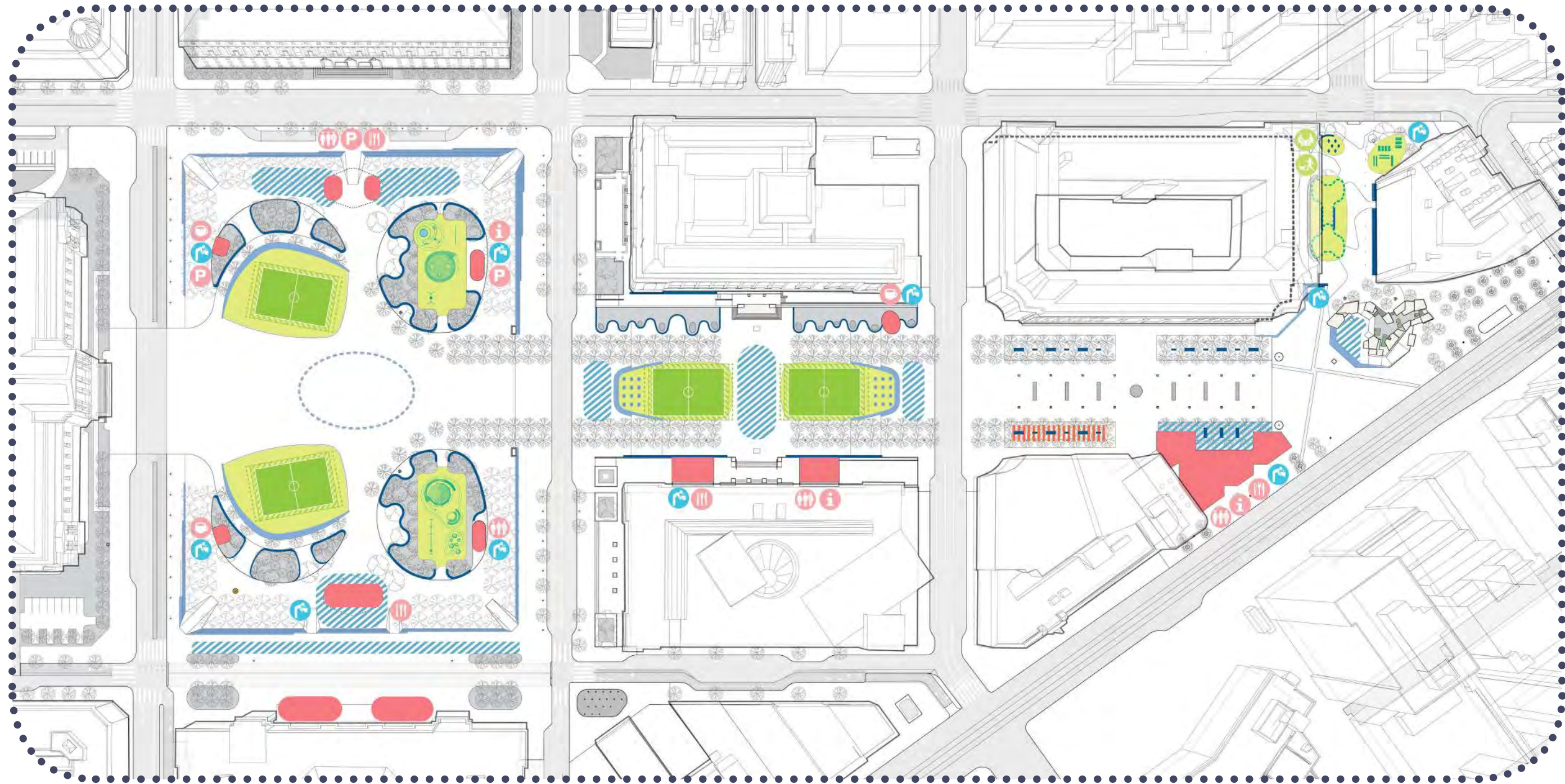
## A DAY IN CIVIC CENTER

Recreational opportunities across the public realm, such as flexible lawns for recreation, bring multi-generational activity to each space, all day long.



## RECREATION + BASIC AMENITIES

Basic amenities will be multi-generational and multi-functional: ample fixed, movable, and informal seating; recreational amenities such as lawns that accommodate soccer, fitness equipment, a dog park, and game tables; bathrooms and water fountains; and structures for active uses such as food/beverage and local retail, park support offices, and information stations.



- RECREATION + BASIC AMENITIES**
- Recreation Area
- Lawn / Youth Soccer
- Play / Fitness Equipment
- Permanent Seating
- Movable Seating
- Lawn Movable Seating
- Informal Seating
- Kiosks + Pavilions
- Potential Best of SF Kiosks
- Water Fountain Locations

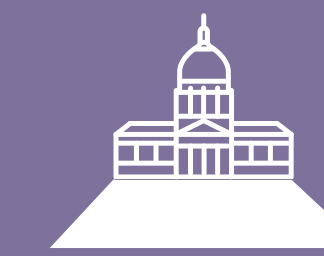


# The safest place in San Francisco

El lugar más seguro de San Francisco

三藩市最安全的地方

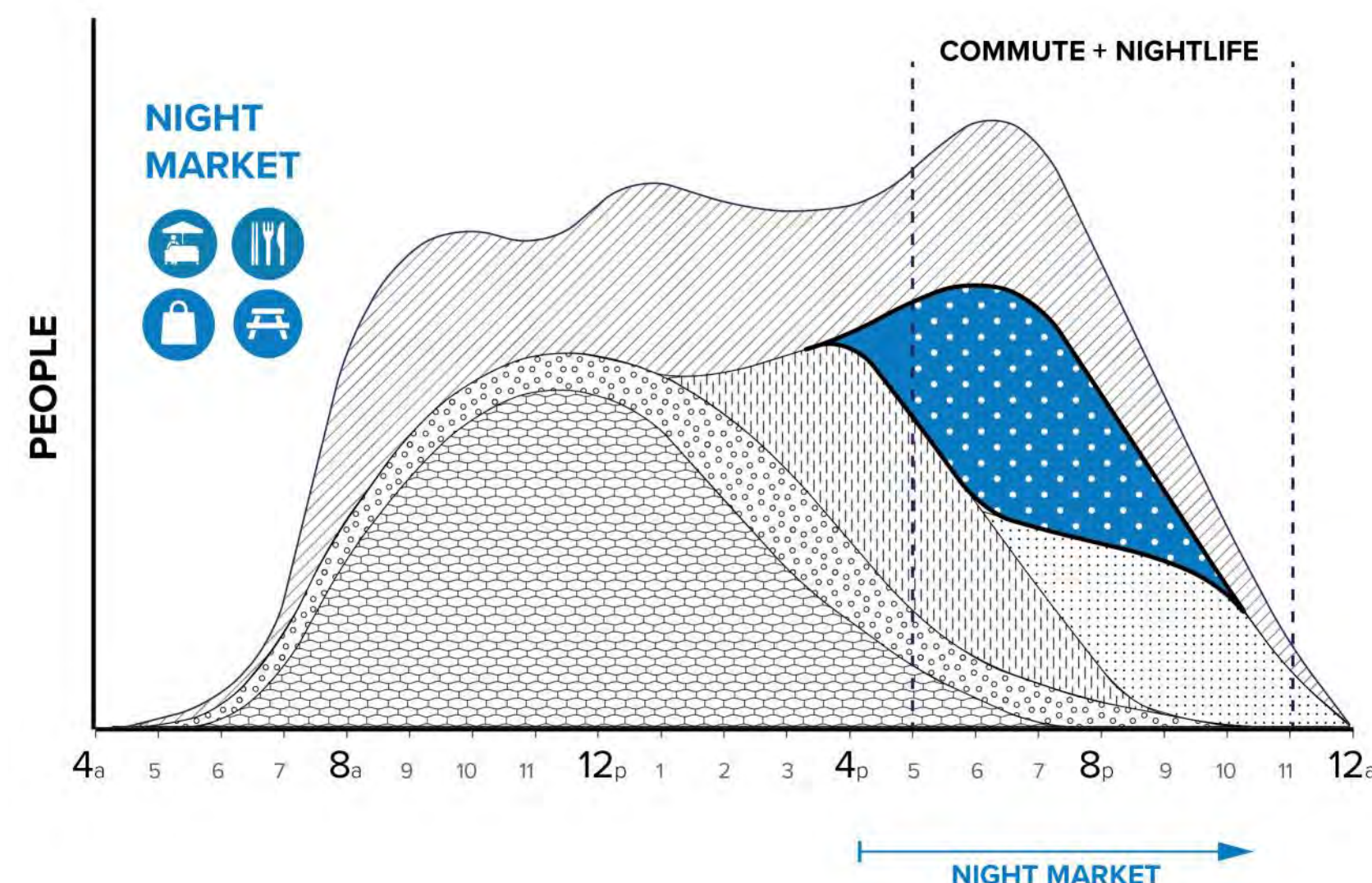
Pinakaligtas na lugar sa San Francisco



**UN PLAZA:** Adaptation of the existing fountain provides visibility, planting, accessible and usable space, and productive stormwater function, transforming a barrier into an amenity to the neighborhood and a welcoming gateway.

## A DAY IN CIVIC CENTER

Events like the Night Market can invite people to linger in the public spaces during commute hours and into the evening. The concept plan for UN Plaza will support these events with new venues for informal performances, permanent retail at the BART Pavilion, and new amenities on Leavenworth.



## NIGHT MARKET



### LEGEND

- Market Tents/Tables
- Commercial Loading
- Off the Grid Food Trucks
- People



# The City's cultural hub and political heart

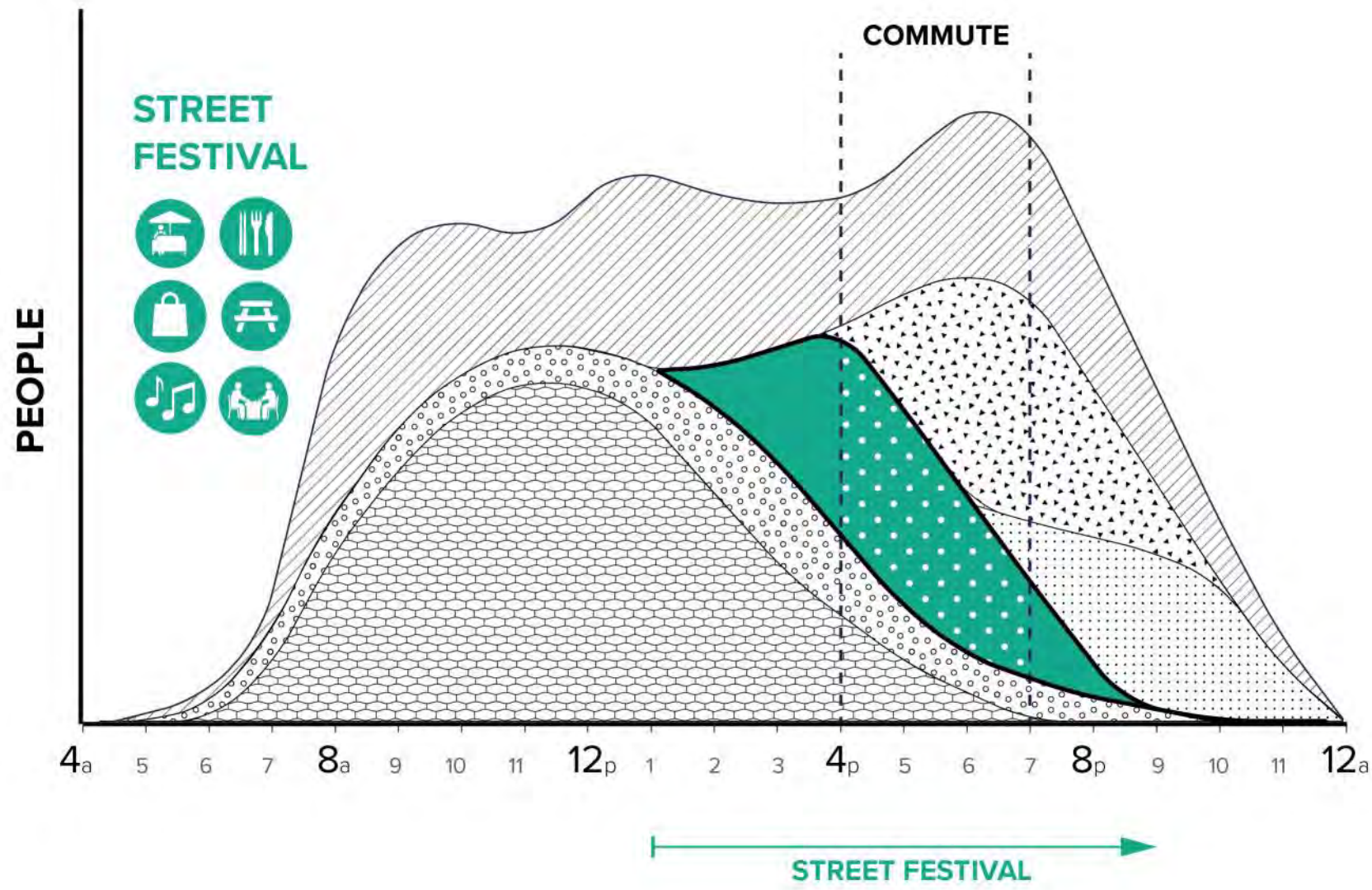
El centro cultural y el corazón político de la Ciudad    本市的文化大本營和政治中心    Sentrong pangkultura at politikal na puso ng Lungsod



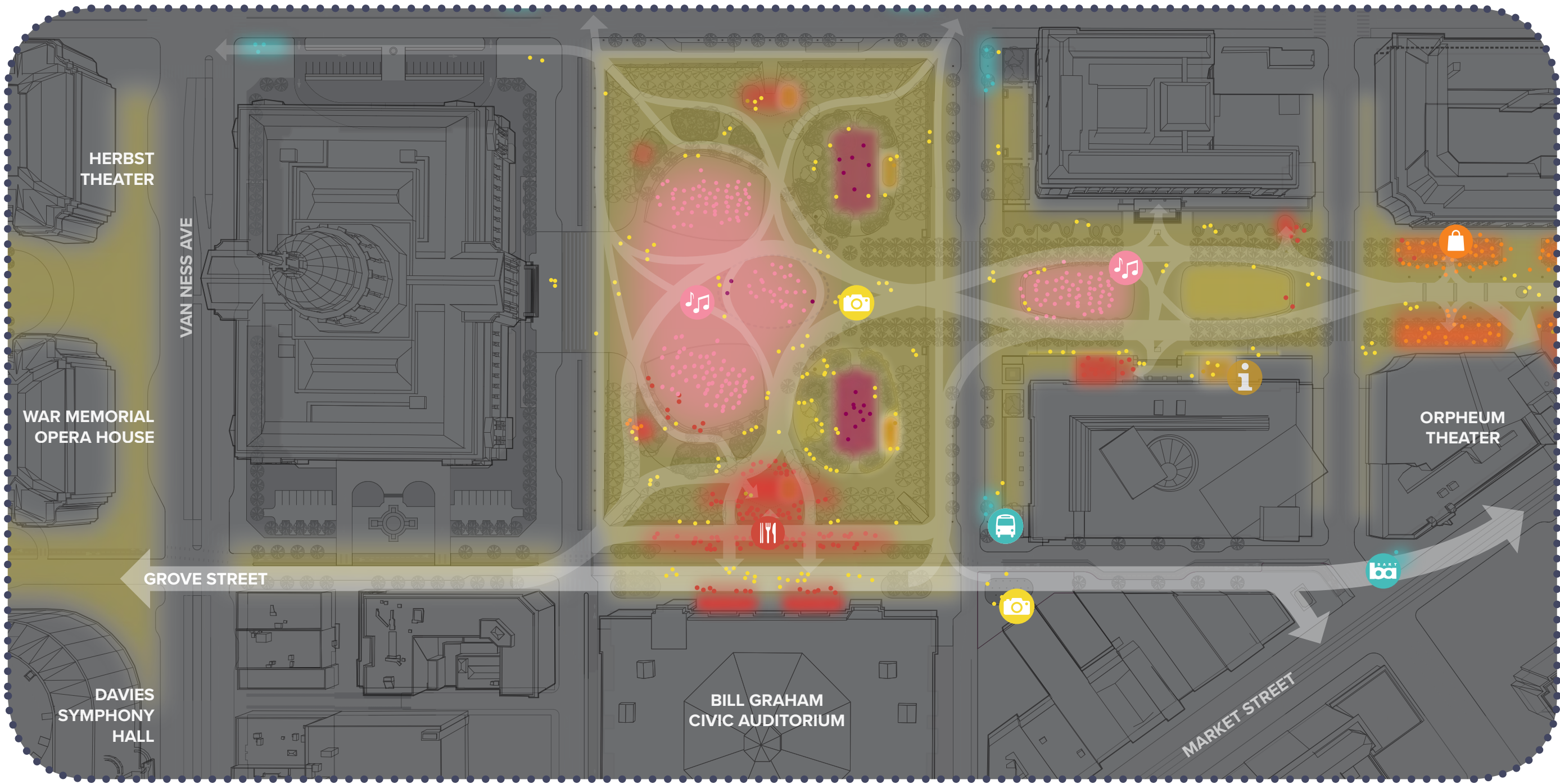
GROVE STREET AT BILL GRAHAM CIVIC AUDITORIUM: The block of Grove Street between Bill Graham Civic Auditorium and Civic Center Plaza provides flexible space for markets and festivals, and a place to meet before performances in the evening.

## A DAY IN CIVIC CENTER

Creating a clear and active connection to Civic Center's cultural institutions is vital to the success of the plan. The concept plan for Grove Street illustrated here connects Civic Center Plaza to the ground floor of Bill Graham Civic Auditorium via a festival street, with new pavilions that bring evening and nighttime life and activity to this important connection.



## GROVE ST CULTURE CORRIDOR



### LEGEND

- Food & Beverage
- Celebrations/Special Events
- Photo Point
- Bus Stop
- Muni Station
- BART Station

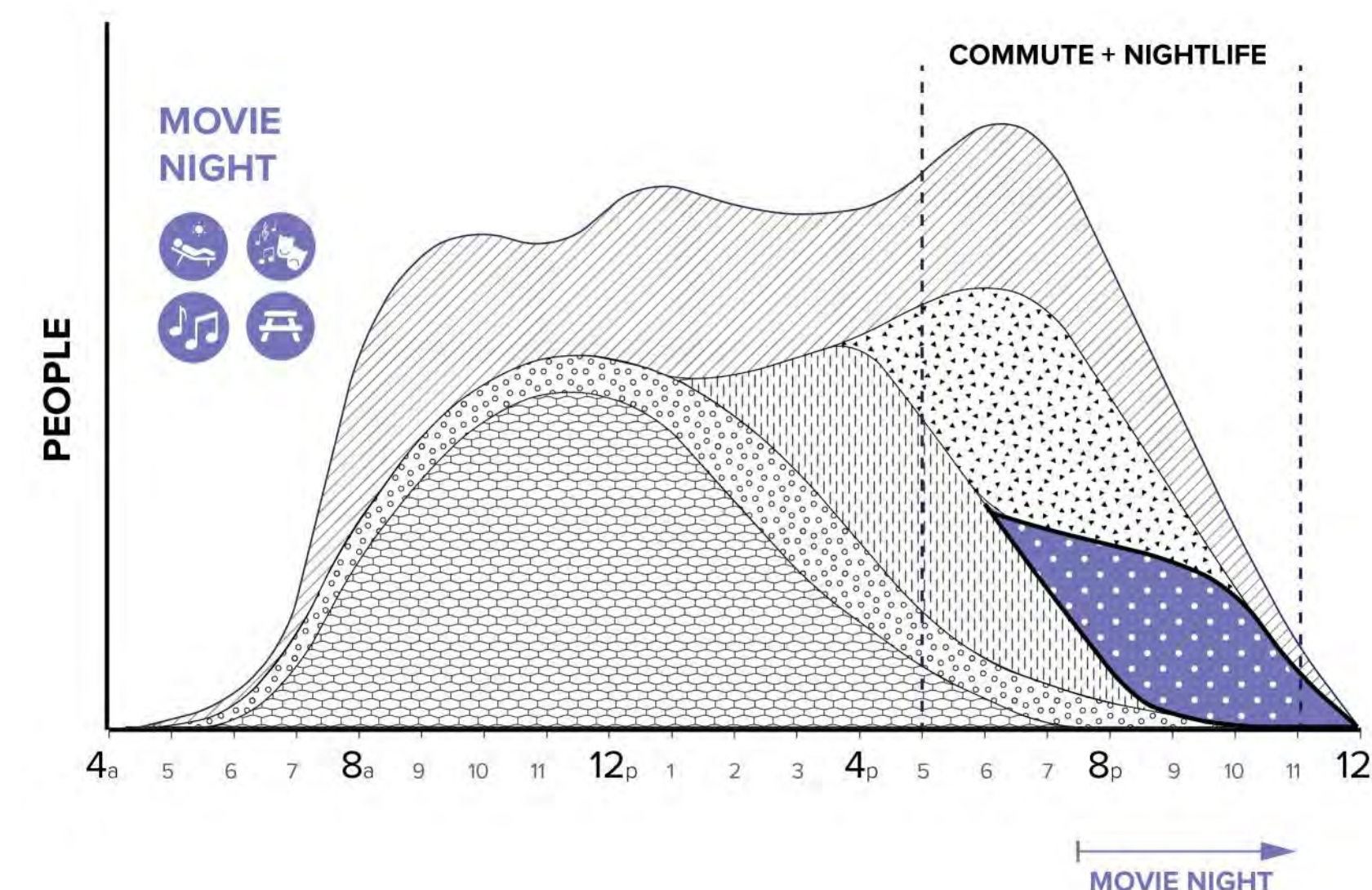




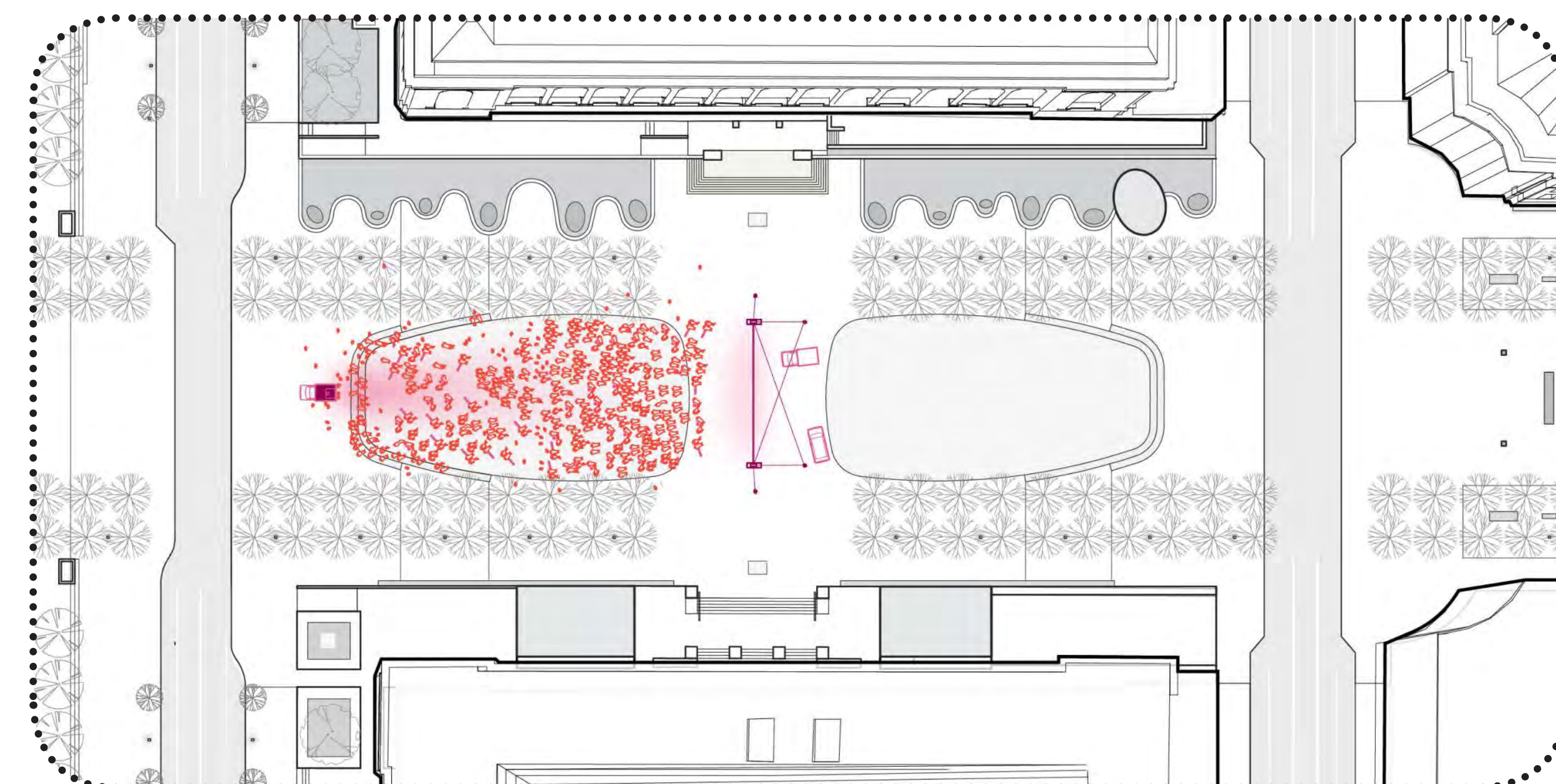
**FULTON MALL:** Gracious lawns combined with an open, flexible plaza connecting the Library and the Asian Art Museum transform the street to a vibrant, inviting park setting day and night.

## A DAY IN CIVIC CENTER

Special events can extend activity into the nighttime hours. The concept plan for Fulton Mall creates a welcoming, sheltered space for programming and events such as movie nights between the Asian Art Museum and the Library.



## MOVIE NIGHT



## LEGEND

-  Movie Screen  
 Movie Projector  
 450 People in Attendance